

## WMATA Riders' Advisory Council

Wednesday, November 5, 2014  
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*

Carol Carter Walker, Chair, At-Large  
Barbara Hermanson, Vice-Chair, VA, City of Alexandria  
Candice Walsh, Vice-Chair, District of Columbia  
Bob Fogel, MD, Montgomery County  
Caroline Kim, District of Columbia  
Aldea Meary-Miller, VA, Arlington County  
Francis DeBernardo, MD, Prince George's County  
Katherine Kortum, MD, Montgomery County  
Debra MacKenzie, At-Large  
Deborah Titus, VA, Fairfax County  
Frederick Walker, VA, Fairfax County

*Other Individuals*

Lynn Bowersox, Assistant General Manager, Department of Customer Service,  
Communications and Marketing, WMATA  
Caroline Laurin, Media Relations Manager, Office of Media Relations, WMATA  
Hitendra Patel, Director, Capital Improvement Program, Department of Transit Infrastructure  
and Engineering Services, WMATA  
Angel Pena, Strategic Program Manager, Office of the Deputy General Manager, WMATA  
A. Robert Troup, Deputy General Manager of Operations, WMATA  
John Pasek, Assistant Board Secretary, WMATA  
Chen Zhou, Civil Construction Engineer, Department of Transit Infrastructure and  
Engineering Services, WMATA  
James N. Jackson, RAC Staff Coordinator

Absent: *Members*

Ben Ball, District of Columbia  
Pablo Destefanis, District of Columbia  
Karen Lynch, Maryland, Vice-Chair, MD, Prince George's County  
Pat Sheehan, At-Large/Accessibility Advisory Committee, Chair  
Lorraine Silva, VA, Arlington County  
Daniel Turk, District of Columbia  
James Wright, Jr., MD, Prince George's County  
Mary Ann Zimmerman, MD, Montgomery County

Presider: Carol Carter Walker, Chair, At-Large

**I. Call to Order:**

Ms. Walker called the November 2014 meeting of the Metro Riders' Advisory Council (RAC) to order at 6:46 p.m.

**II. Public Comment Period:**

Ms. Walker recognized members of the public who were signed up to speak.

As there were no members of the public who were signed up to speak, Ms. Walker closed the public comment period.

**III. Approval of Agenda:**

Without objection, the agenda was approved.

**IV. Approval of Past Meeting Minutes:**

Mr. Fogel moved, seconded by Ms. Kortum, to approve as submitted the October 1, 2014 minutes of the Riders' Advisory Council.

Ayes: Mr. Fogel, Ms. Hermanson, Ms. Kim, Ms. Kortum, Ms. Titus, Ms. Walker, Mr. Walker and Ms. Walsh

Nays: None

Abstentions: Mr. DeBernardo, Ms. MacKenzie and Ms. Meary-Miller

The motion was approved.

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**V. Committee Reports**

- Chair's Report to WMATA Board of Directors (October 2014) – Ms. Walker

Ms. Walker referred to the Chair's Report that was included in the agenda package. She then briefly reviewed her comments to the WMATA Board of Directors at their October 23, 2014 meeting. She noted that the comments were not part of the October Chair's Report, but would be transmitted to the Board of Directors on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Walker summarized the discussion from the Board of Director's meeting regarding the Metrorail Blue Line service changes to accommodate the Concert for Valor event on November 11<sup>th</sup>. She noted that WMATA would be reimbursed for direct costs, as well as printing, administrative staff, et cetera. The Department of Customer Service, Communications and Marketing provided RAC members and the public with copies of *The Concert for Valor: Metro Rider Guide*.

Mr. DeBernardo commended Ms. Walker for her response to the Board regarding the service changes related to The Concert for Valor event.

Referencing WMATA's November 3, 2014 interview with Dr. Gridlock [Robert Thomsom] of *The Washington Post*, Ms. Meary-Miller questioned a statement by WMATA that Metrorail service on Veteran's Day would be less interrupted this year than it was last year. Ms. Walker clarified stating that the interviewee [Lynn Bowersox] meant that concerns had been expressed previously regarding limited Veterans Day Metrorail service, and that this year service would be improved upon. Ms. Bowersox is actually quoted as saying:

“Arlington Cemetery will have rail service all day, as well as free shuttle bus service between the hours of 7a-3p. On rail, a special train will run continuously between Reagan National Airport and Arlington Cemetery stations. Bus shuttles will connect Rosslyn, Pentagon and Arlington Cemetery.

This level of service is actually greater than what was operated last Veterans Day.”

Ms. Meary-Miller asked if the service changes to the Metrorail Blue Line were unprecedented or something that happened yearly. Ms. Walker stated that although service was generally limited on Veteran's Day, that this was the first year that a Metrorail line had been removed from service. Ms. Caroline Laurin, Media Relations Manager, Office of Media Relations, WMATA, further clarified Ms. Bowersox's statement saying that customers would see more frequent service on Veteran's Day this year given the special shuttle trains between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and Arlington National Cemetery.

Ms. Hermanson recounted previous Veteran's Day Metrorail service changes where there was increased crowding on the station platforms. She then referenced an October 10<sup>th</sup> newspaper article stating that WMATA had been working with event planners for several weeks to develop a plan for the service changes in question. Ms. Hermanson expressed concern that WMATA was not informed of the Concert for Valor event sooner. She also expressed concern that the Metrorail Blue Line was continuously affected by the infrequency of trains and now the service changes due to the concert event. She also said that the online and written communications were not clear. Ms. Hermanson suggested that there be staff in the Metrorail stations to distribute *The Concert for Valor: Metro Rider Guide* for customers who may not pay attention to signage due to the Concert for Valor headings.

Mr. Walker commented that he did not want *The Concert for Valor: Metro Rider Guide* to be distributed because it was confusing. He identified several areas of the guide that he found unclear. Ms. Hermanson indicated her agreement and retracted her suggestion that the guides be distributed. She suggested that there be some type of additional information in the Metrorail stations to improve communication.

Ms. Kortum asked if this was the final version of *The Concert for Valor: Metro Rider Guide*. Ms. Laurin responded in the affirmative. Ms. Walker suggested that if RAC members had any comments regarding changes to the guide to submit them to staff through the RAC Coordinator.

The RAC discussed the omissions in *The Concert for Valor: Metro Rider Guide* including language about the closure of the Blue Line and the frequency and times of special shuttle trains between Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport and Arlington National Cemetery.

Ms. Walker polled the RAC as to how many members would utilize the Metrorail on November 11<sup>th</sup>. She commented that it would be informative to have firsthand accounts of the service on that day.

Ms. Kortum suggested that the print and online guides outline the Metrorail stations near the National Mall and indicate what line the particular station is on.

Ms. MacKenzie stated that the service changes could potentially confuse many visitors. She recounted how Fourth of July service changes affected her during a trip to Washington, DC in 2006.

Ms. Walker inquired if changes that were made to *The Concert for Valor: Metro Rider Guide* could be incorporated into the online communication materials. Ms. Laurin responded in the affirmative.

Mr. Fogel stated that the matter at hand raised questions for him regarding communications. He questioned if there was a mechanism that the RAC could use participate when events similar to this one were proposed. He suggested that the RAC be used as a focus group. He then commented that there should be a communications plan accompanying the construction plan related to the Metrorail Red Line construction projects. Ms. Walker suggested that the RAC Customer Service Committee look into the creation of a communications plan.

Mr. DeBernardo commented that the issues surrounding the service changes were abundant given the multiple questions surrounding *The Concert for Valor: Metro Rider Guide*, which was designed by communications professionals.

Ms. Titus suggested that station announcements be made to inform customers of the service changes on November 11<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Fogel and Ms. Hermanson expressed their agreement.

Ms. Hermanson suggested that efforts be made as soon as possible to communicate information regarding the Metrorail Red Line construction projects to assist customers with decisions regarding residency, vacations and et cetera.

- Metrobus Public Hearing Report – Ms. Walker

Ms. Walker referred to the Metrobus Public Hearing Report that was included in the agenda package. Ms. Hermanson commented regarding the leadership and professionalism of Chair Tom Downs, Board member Mary Hines and Jim Hamre, Director of Bus Operations Scheduling, during the hearings that she attended. She remarked about the excellent job that they did to make customers feel that their feedback was warranted and necessary to the public hearing process.

- Committee Chair Reports

Budget and Finance Committee – Ms. Walker reported that the Budget and Finance Committee met on October 27, 2014 to discuss a proposed deliverable on fare simplification. She stated that they reviewed materials submitted by Mr. Walker and studied fares currently in place by transit authorities in other jurisdictions.

Customer Service Committee – No report given.

Governance Committee – Ms. Walker announced that the revised version of the RAC bylaws were currently under review by the WMATA Office of the General Counsel. The date for approval of the document is at the November 20, 2014 Board of Directors meeting. She also announced that the RAC Governance Committee was in the process of developing committee descriptions and would forward them to the RAC for comment at a later date.

Program, Projects and Planning Committee – No report given.

## **VI. Metrorail Redline Construction Update**

Mr. A. Robert Troup, Deputy General Manager of Operations, WMATA, was present to discuss the proposed Metrorail Red Line construction projects and respond generally to questions and comments. Mr. Troup noted that the projects included construction at both the Bethesda and Silver Spring stations, which would be required for the proposed Metrorail Purple Line. He then discussed the proposed waterproofing project to occur at the Medical Center station. Mr. Troup introduced Ms. Chen Zhou, Civil Construction Engineer, Department of Transit Infrastructure and Engineering Services, WMATA, to review the plan regarding the crossover waterproofing project at Medical Center station. Ms. Zhou provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled *Major Red Line Construction*, which consisted of the following slides:

- Purpose
- Medical Center Crossover: Existing Conditions and Water Intrusion Reasons
- Crossover Waterproofing Options: Option 1 – Geomembrane System
- Crossover Waterproofing Options: Option 2 – Precast Concrete Arch
- Option Recommended and Selected
- Opportunity to Advance Additional Redline Work
- Purple Line – New Bethesda Mezzanine
- Grosvenor Aerial Structure Retrofit
- Grosvenor Platform and Canopy Rehab
- Tentative Schedule

Ms. Zhou also provided a video presentation, which provided a visual outline the water intrusion at Medical Center station and water proofing options.

Ms. Titus suggested that staff work with WMATA Office of Customer Service to create a clear logistical plan regarding the closure of the Red Line stations in question.

Mr. Fogel asked if the water intrusion was due to deferred maintenance or structural deficiencies related to the construction at the stations. Mr. Troup commented that the rail system was approximately 40 years old and that the technology available at that time for tunneling was a problem that many transit authorities were dealing with presently. Mr. Fogel asked how long the water intrusion had been a problem at Medical Center station. Mr. Troup stated that the problem had been apparent between 10-12 years and that staff continuously addressed the effects of the leaks, but that the intrusion worsened over time.

With regard to the Purple Line construction discussed during the presentation, Mr. DeBernardo asked if the construction would begin in January of 2017 or December of 2017. Mr. Troup stated said that it was dependent on how the Maryland Transit Authority (MTA) established their contracts, but that the Bethesda station mezzanine work to prepare for the Purple Line would be conducted during the 2016 construction timeframe established.

Ms. Hermanson asked what kind of discussions had occurred with regard to accommodating riders affected by the proposed Red Line construction. Mr. Troup stated that this would be treated in a manner similar to the way that shutdowns were treated currently. He said that shuttle buses would be used between stations and that WMATA would implement an extensive communications plan. Mr. Troup did note one difference in that this construction involved consecutive weekend station shutdowns, but that this variance would be addressed as part of the communications plan.

Ms. Kortum questioned if the water intrusion was generally located only at crossovers and at this particular crossover. Mr. Troup responded stating that there was water intrusion throughout the tunnels, but that this was an area identified by staff to be the worst. He continued saying that the water intrusion occurring at the crossover was critical because of the effect on signal switches, track circuits and other machinery. Ms. Zhou added that the proposed construction plans also addressed water remediation in the tunnels between the stations during the time that the stations were shutdown. Ms. Kortum asked if the pre-cast panels would be used to address the water intrusion in the tunnels also. Ms. Zhou said that “crack injections” would be used for smaller leaks and plugs and drainage rerouting to address larger cracks with leaks.

Citing the aggressiveness of the proposed construction projects, Mr. Walker inquired as to WMATA construction program and the quality of the poured concrete to be used. Mr. Troup stated that the proposed geomembrane system presented issues with quality application due to the level of exactness needed, but that the concrete arches were precast panels that would be produced by the manufacturer in a controlled environment. He expressed a high level of confidence in the construction program and the ability of staff to successfully execute the

proposed construction projects. Ms. Zhou then discussed the risk analysis that was conducted, as well as the constructability and schedule reviews.

Ms. Kim asked what impact the proposed construction projects would have on Metrorail service delays. Mr. Troup stated that the improvement would help to manage many of the Red Line delays.

Mr. Fogel questioned the confidence of staff that the proposed water intrusion solution would work and how long the improvements would last. Mr. Troup stated that staff were very confident in the proposed solution and that it would last approximately 50 years.

Ms. Kortum asked if a second crossover between Bethesda and Friendship Heights stations would need a similar type of remediation. Mr. Troup responded in the negative. Mr. Hitendra Patel, Director, Capital Improvement Program, Department of Transit Infrastructure and Engineering Services, WMATA, expounded stating that due to the geology and train alignment, that the Friendship Heights station crossover was less impacted by water infiltration than the crossover at Medical Center station. Therefore, WMATA would not apply the same type of remediation, although there was a leakage problem at Friendship Heights station. Mr. Troup added that WMATA employed an aggressive leak mitigation program, whereby leaks were filled with grout injections.

Ms. Titus asked if the proposed water intrusion solution would be used in any Metrorail line. Mr. Troup stated that he did not foresee the concrete panels being applied in any other Metrorail construction.

Ms. Walker inquired about a news investigative report regarding the potential for a Metrorail tunnel cave-in. She asked if that report was related to the proposed red line construction project. Mr. Troup stated that the report was about the station in question, however that the report was inaccurate and that there was not a pending safety issue.

## **VII. RAC Orientation and Membership Mentoring Discussion**

Ms. Walker announced that RAC members would receive a RAC Member Bio Form to be shared internally.

Ms. Walsh stated that RAC members participated in orientation exercises in 2010 and 2013. She requested volunteers to form a small workgroup to assemble pertinent information to revamp the RAC Orientation process. Ms. Meary-Miller suggested that future orientation sessions include information on parliamentary procedure.

## **VIII. Announcements**

Ms. Walker announced that any RAC members who wanted to be considered for reappointment must submit a completed application to WMATA by November 7, 2014. Ms. Hermanson

inquired as to the number of applications that had been submitted. James Jackson, RAC Coordinator stated that approximately 150 applications had been received.

Ms. Walker also announced that WMATA's Board of Directors approved nominations to elect new officers for 2015 yesterday during their monthly meeting. Effective in January, the Board officers will include: Chairman, Mort Downey; Vice Chairman, Alvin Nichols; 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair, Catherine Hudgins; and (then) Past Chairman, Tom Downs.

Ms. Kortum requested that the RAC meeting agenda listed the start times for all of the upcoming meetings.

Ms. Walsh commented on changes to the Metrobus service along 14<sup>th</sup> Street. She said that the RAC may want to consider exploring the changes at length. Ms. Walker suggested contacting Sam Zimbabwe, Associate Director, Policy, Planning & Sustainability Administration, DDOT.

Lastly, Ms. Walker announced that she would not seek reappointment to RAC following the expiration of her term.

## **IX. Adjournment**

Without objection, Ms. Walker adjourned the regular session meeting at 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

James N. Jackson  
Riders' Advisory Council Coordinator