

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held a meeting on Tuesday, May 16, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. at the Mobility Training Center, 700 W. St. Germain St, St. Cloud, MN

The following individuals were in attendance: Kim Hoff, Ryan Daniel, Debbie Anderson, Dave Green, Suzanne Driessen, Karen Maruska, Jenny Svihel, Bruce Benner, David Williamsen, and Brenda Severson.

Welcome. Debbie welcomed everyone. She mentioned that Ryan Daniel was at the meeting. She had invited him to come because there are a few new members that she wanted him to meet. She asked everyone to introduce themselves and explain their reason for being on the committee. Bruce mentioned he lives at the Grace McDowall apartments and was instrumental in getting Route 33 changed so that he goes by the apartments. He mentioned that a lot of people are asking why the route can't go down 33rd Avenue and turn past the Wal-Mart instead of turning onto Division on its way to Crossroads. He said he has spoken with a lot of the drivers and they agree 100% that there is enough time to do this. Debbie handed out the current Route 33 schedule. Ryan thanked everyone for their help on the committee. He stated their input matters as we look to enhance our services. He used the comments Bruce made about Route 33 as an example.

Debbie asked how many people live at Grace McDowall. Bruce wasn't sure but thought about 200. He stated about 50% of the people ride the bus. Debbie stated when we look at routes and make changes, it's important to consider individuals with disabilities so that we can get them closer to their destination and then they can use fixed route versus Dial-a-Ride.

Brenda asked what the policy is regarding the Dial-a-Ride drivers having umbrellas to protect the passengers on rainy days. She assumed the driver would have one so she didn't bring one with her earlier in the day. Debbie said she would follow up with her question and find out what the protocol is for umbrellas.

Bruce asked about people that have wet themselves before getting on the bus. He had asked about this in the past and was told that the bus drivers have equipment to protect the seats but he has asked some drivers and they don't have anything. Debbie said there has been discussion about this. If there's an opportunity for a driver to suggest to the person to go back home and change their clothes, but we can't leave someone stranded at the bus stop and not get home.

Karen asked about signage at SCSU to designate Routes 8 and 12 and which ones are going out on route and which ones are going to the Transit Center. Debbie thought there was signage but will check to make sure. Karen also mentioned there could be better signage for the blind at the Transit Center. The ones that are above on the overhang do no good for people who are blind. She stated she will send pictures with examples from Fargo/Moorhead. She also commented on the poles by the ramps at the corners of the Transit Center. They should be a brighter color. Debbie stated she would take all of the information that was discussed to the Operations Staff.

Old Business.

- 1) Transit Center closure. Debbie mentioned that the project will be done in two phases and so the Transit Center won't be affected until around June 24, 2017 and will probably go a little later into September.

- 2) Al Loehr Apartments. Bruce mentioned a couple of veterans have asked about the accessibility to the bus stop across the street from the apartments. There is no curb cut/accessible access for a wheelchair or walkers. They have to go all the way down to the intersection to cross the street and come back to the bus stop. Debbie mentioned there has been conversation about this and she will bring it up again to Operations. She stated there is a sidewalk on the VA side from the stoplight by Apollo. It was suggested that a call be made to the Planning Department at the City of St. Cloud to see if they could put in a curb cut.
- 3) Sartell Wal-Mart. Bruce mentioned the sidewalk by the bus shelters wasn't being shoveled in the winter. He called them and they said they would get on it. Debbie mentioned that Metro Bus staff is responsible for cleaning the shelter and it should probably be more of a priority because it is a transfer site. She will bring it to the attention of the maintenance department.
- 4) St. Cloud Wal-Mart. Bruce also commented the glass of this shelter is always dirty. Debbie told him when he sees things like that, to give her a call so she can report it to maintenance. She also mentioned he can let the bus driver know and they will bring that information back to management as well.

New Business.

- 1) RAC member event involvement. Debbie mentioned that she would like RAC members to get more involved with Metro Bus events. She handed out a list that the Marketing department put together of upcoming events and encouraged everyone to sign up to volunteer at different events throughout the year.
- 2) Ugo Free. The program is open to children years 17 and under. For the months of June through August, they ride free. There's an application that needs to be filled out and signed by a parent or guardian in order to get the pass. It can be picked up at the Transit Center, Mobility Center or download the application on Metro Bus website. There are three travel training classes in June which are open to children and their parents to come and learn about riding the bus, as well as one-on-one training opportunities.
- 3) Independent Lifestyles. Debbie handed out a flyer from them. They are looking for emerging civic leaders.
- 4) Hiring drivers. Debbie explained that applicants now need to have their CDL permit which includes passenger endorsement, air brakes and general knowledge. They will then be considered for an interview and if chosen, they will be trained and tested for their license. The starting wage for training is \$14.86, and the top rate after five years of service is currently \$21.62. Every three years the union renegotiates their contract for wage and benefits.
- 5) Driver Incentive program. Dave Green, Fixed Route Operations Manager talked about the new incentive program in which the criteria was recently updated. It's based on the different job positions (maintenance, drivers and dispatchers). They are all eligible for the program each month based on things like customer service complaints, accidents, need for discipline, error in cash drawers, etc. Everyone that is eligible for the month will be put into a drawing for a \$75 gift card. There will be two winners drawn each month. The gift card expense is coming from profits that we receive for the vending machines. Last month 66 people qualified. Brenda asked if office staff can be included. Dave explained there is a separate small fund set aside for an annual

lunch or dinner gathering to recognize office staff. There was also discussion about having a winter banquet where all of the monthly qualifiers will be recognized and they will receive a pin. There will also be door prizes for those that attend the banquet.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:53 a.m.