

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held a meeting on Tuesday, August 15, 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, Debbie Anderson, Ryan Daniel, Suzanne Driessen, Jenny Svihel, Bruce Benner, David Williamsen, and Silas Patrick.

Welcome. Debbie welcomed everyone. She asked everyone to introduce themselves, and then asked if it would be nice if she made name plaques to place in front of everyone, so they didn't need to do introductions each meeting.

Old Business.

- 1) RAC email. Debbie mentioned there wasn't any email. She explained that the RAC committee business cards have an email that anyone in the general public can send general questions or concerns.

New Business.

- 1) Meeting agendas/times. Ryan mentioned the RAC has been in existence for three years and he wanted to hear from the committee what they liked or disliked about the meetings and also whether they felt the meetings should be monthly vs. quarterly. He stated he felt the RAC committee are the eyes and ears for Metro Bus and he wants to hear from everyone. He gave the example of changes to Route #33 and the barriers that are involved in making changes. Some members felt that once a month was good and others felt that quarterly gave them more time to gather information and that the use of email hasn't really been utilized and it is something the committee members could promote more. Debbie felt when things come up she likes to run it by the members each month versus waiting. She also thinks every other month could be confusing. Silas explained that he doesn't use email so he would appreciate meeting more frequently. Silas asked how long does a route analysis take? Ryan explained that the long range plan took one year to complete and it depends if the recommended changes are minor or major changes. Silas didn't feel that once a month was even often enough to meet. Suzanne felt they should revisit the purpose of the RAC committee. She felt it was to give input and suggestions. Debbie stated there is a definition of the RAC committee and maybe it should be shown on the agenda each meeting. Silas gave examples of things that he felt could be discussed such as bus shelter locations, and the bus pick up/drop off location at Crossroads. He feels riders should always be first and that safety is very important. Ryan explained that we have a lease agreement with Crossroads and they tell us where we can operate the buses. After further discussion, Debbie mentioned that Tom Cruikshank has history on the Crossroads location, if someone wanted more background on the issue. Bruce mentioned there is a lot of smoking going on in the shelters at Crossroads and businesses don't appreciate the smoke coming in their front doors. He has mentioned it a few times to people that are smoking and they just swear at him.

It was decided to keep the meetings monthly at this time and that a final decision will be made at the next meeting. Debbie mentioned she would get input from the members that weren't present at the meeting.

- 2) Community Involvement/Marketing Opportunities. Debbie thanked everyone for helping at the Benton County Fair, Know Your Neighbor events, and the Art Crawl.

She mentioned there aren't a lot of marketing events scheduled until the Art Crawl in November and then Fill the Flyer the first week of December, which is a food drive/cash donations for Salvation Army and Catholic Charities.

There was discussion about bus wraps and interior signage. Ryan explained there are two companies that handle the selling of bus wraps and interior advertising for Metro Bus. Ryan explained that a specific number of buses are designated for vinyl wraps so we can maintain the Metro Bus image with CNG signage, etc. The newer buses have frames on the sides of the buses for advertising. Ryan also explained there are times of the year when we go on the radio and talk about different events that are happening such as the U Go Free program. Debbie explained the current marketing campaign involves a postcard that was mailed out to people who live within a corridor of Route 5 and promoting that route. Bruce commented that some of the operators don't know anything about the coupons that are included with the Route 5 mailer.

Debbie talked about Community Outreach events and different committees that staff are involved with. She handed out a survey that has been used recently at events which is targeting people that don't ride the bus. Ryan explained we are working with SCTCC and SCSU to promote Metro Bus more on campus. Ryan recommended presenting ridership statistics at each RAC meeting, starting next month.

Bruce commented on Route 33 and said around 10 am they don't leave at the top of the hour because they're too far ahead so they wait until: 04 minutes after. He also mentioned that Route 5 has been consistently late for transfers. Ryan stated they are currently doing a route analysis on Route 5.

Jenny mentioned that in the 9th Ave North/Place of Hope area there have been a couple of people on the bus including herself that feel like they are being followed by strangers. She said that a couple of operators have told her not to get off the bus because they had the feeling she was being followed by someone. She wondered what our policy was. Debbie stated that we can't control what goes on in the community prior to someone getting on the bus, but the buses are considered safe havens so if someone feels threatened they should talk to the bus operator, stay on the bus and when you get to the Transit Center, they can call a street supervisor to help you.

- 3) Public Open Forum. Ryan briefly explained more about the reason for the Public Open Forum on the agenda. He felt that the public may not have the courage to talk to a bus operator or someone on the RAC committee but would feel more comfortable coming to a RAC meeting to talk about their ideas or questions.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:57 a.m.