

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held a meeting on Tuesday, June 19, 2018 at 9:00 a.m. at the Mobility Training Center, 700 W. St. Germain St, St. Cloud, MN

The following individuals were in attendance: Ryan Daniel, Kim Hoff, Doug Diedrichsen, Suzanne Driessen, David Williamsen, Bruce Benner, Jenny Svihel, Brenda Severson and Alexis Lutgen. Visitors: Jerry Schmitz, Hallela Hinton-Williams. Absent: Aisha Bah

Welcome. Ryan welcomed everyone and read the purpose of the RAC. Everyone introduced themselves.

Public Open Forum. Open Discussion. There was none.

Old Business.

- 1) Email. There was none.
- 2) Operational Update.

Ridership: Ryan explained that May ridership was listed under New Business but he went over the report at this time. He explained how to read the report on the fixed route by using Route #1 as an example, going through the comparison of 2017 and 2018 on: 1) Total # of service hours, 2) Total # of riders, 3) Passengers Per Hour. Suzanne asked what the system wide goal is for passengers per hour. Doug mentioned that 20 would be the "Gold standard" but currently because there is a loss or ridership nationwide, he would be happy with any upward trend and felt a well performing route would be anything above 15. Brenda asked why ridership is down nationwide. Doug stated that gas prices are down, economy is up, and people have jobs so they can afford cars, gas and parking. Ryan mentioned that options have changed to such as Uber. Ryan also went over the Dial-a-Ride information.

Bus Shelters. Ryan explained that staff had a conversation recently about shelters. Over the weekend there was damage done to two shelters which were cleaned up but they are discussing the option of putting plexiglass instead of traditional glass which is more expensive but safer for the passengers if something can't be cleaned up immediately. We are getting price quotes on plexiglass to be used only when something breaks and would replace with that instead of replacing all of the shelters right away. Jerry suggested leaving the window that faces the buses with regular glass because it's hard to see people inside the shelter and plexiglass gets cloudy over time. Suzanne mentioned there is always conversation about shelters and she wondered if they were really cost effective or should we discontinue use of them. Ryan mentioned that shelters are a touchy subject.

Ryan mentioned there are U Go Free cards which allow youth 17 years and younger to ride free during the months of June through August. Alexis mentioned the United Way received passes for the Community Resource Centers at Lincoln and Discovery and were able to get the passes out to the families before the school year ended. They commented they needed to get more because so many families were interested in the program.

ID Cards. Ryan addressed Brenda's suggestion about having the Operators name posted in the bus. He mentioned when he worked in Washington DC, all the

Operators name slid their name into a holder on the bus. Jerry mentioned it is a nice idea but he gave an example of a day when there were a lot of buses that needed to get switched out while they were on break, and it's just one more thing to think about when you're already pushed for time while trying to have a break. Ryan and Jerry both agreed it wasn't about the time it takes but remembering to do it. Brenda felt that drivers needed to be trained and if they forgot, maybe they would get fined? Brenda mentioned if the operator has their name on their shirt, she isn't always able to see it, especially if they have their coat on.

New Business.

Chief Operating Officer. Ryan announced that Jim Perez passed away recently. Ryan stated he will be filling in at the RAC meetings until a replacement person has been hired. He mentioned everything is on hold in regard to hiring; management is still discussing what will take place in the future.

Internal newsletter. Ryan distributed the most recent newsletter and summarized the contents.

Open Discussion.

Local Bus Rodeo. Ryan mentioned the rodeo was on June 7th at SCSU. He explained what the rodeo is which is basically a timed obstacle course where the operators have the opportunity to showcase their abilities. The top 2 people in each division then go to the state competition and if they place first at state, they can go to the National competition. Ryan announced the names of the top 2 places in both fixed route and Dial-a-Ride divisions. Todd Dezurik (Dial-a-Ride driver) went to the National Rodeo recently after placing 1st in the state competition last year. He came in 3rd place at Nationals.

Bruce asked about Dial-a-Ride. He commented he has recently starting using the service and had a couple of situations recently. The first situation involved the bus going to the wrong Wal-Mart which resulted in them being 15-20 minutes late. The second situation he was supposed to go home (Grace McDowall Apts), but instead the driver took him to Russell Arms Apts. in Sauk Rapids. He felt the drivers need more training, that when mistakes happen like this, there is a lot of time wasted. He also feels that dispatchers should be verifying the information before they hang up the phone with the customer. Ryan stated if it happens again that he needs to call Customer Service.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.