

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held a meeting on Tuesday, July 17, 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, Nate Ramacher, Bruce Benner, Jenny Svihel, Brenda Severson and Aisha Bah. Alexis Lutgen. Visitors: Jerry Schmitz. Absent: Suzanne Driessen, David Williamsen, Alexis Lutgen.

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. Ryan mentioned that a customer had written with a comment about the luggage compartment on the Northstar Link bus. He said they had put their luggage underneath and it had slid to the other side and they had to crawl inside to get their bag. It was suggested that some type of hook/hanger be installed so that the hook could be used to reach inside and get their luggage. Ryan has asked maintenance to look into purchasing and installing something.
- 2) Operational Update.
 - a) CentraCare meeting. Ryan mentioned he will be having a meeting with CentraCare in the next week or so to talk about their parking issues at all three of their locations. They are hoping Metro Bus can partner with them to get their employees/customers to the different campuses. They are wanting more of an express route. Bruce mentioned the bush by the hospital bus shelter obstructs the view of the shelter, and the drivers can't see if there's someone in the shelter until it's too late.
- 3) New Business.
 - a) Ryan mentioned that at the Board meeting later in the day there were a lot of items on the agenda, but specifically they would be renewing contracts with SCSU, SCTCC, Summertime by George trolley service and District 742. For example, at SCSU there is a special shuttle bus for students that park at the K lot and are taken to the Miller Learning Center. Students are also eligible to ride Metro Bus for free through the contract with SCSU. SCTCC students can ride for free also. District 742 is charged \$.90 a ride so their students can utilize Metro Bus for rides to school. Ryan explained that he and Doug have started the initial conversation with District 742 about making the contract bigger, potentially having more high school students utilize Metro Bus versus school buses. This process could take one to two years to put into place.

- b) Ryan mentioned that the operations team recently met with New Flyer. He reported that three replacement buses are on order with production to begin on October 29th and expected delivery date sometime after January 1, 2019. The question came up at the meeting, if Metro Bus was looking at providing service to New Flyer. Metro Bus is not saying no, it can't be done, but there is always the possibility of public/private partnerships. They will consider the possibility of some type of shuttle service a few times a day.
- c) Ridership: Doug mentioned the top performing routes continue to be at the top: 1, 2, 7, 21. The low performing routes are 10, 31 and 33. These are routes that will be focused on with the service enhancements. He mentioned that Crossroads will serve as connectors for these routes. We are still seeing a decline in ridership versus last year during this time period. Doug mentioned that one of the goals for the route enhancement is looking at the layover times. The primary focus are the core commuter hours.
- d) Marketing Update: Nate discussed the Benton County Fair. He asked for volunteers to help work at the booth and passed around a schedule. If someone is interested after the meeting, give him a call. He also showed a picture of a new bus wrap that is promoting Metro Bus for employment. He explained it was an older bus with just a few years left of service life and the advertising that was on it was old, so it has been redone. There are a number of employees featured on the bus wrap, depicting different areas within the company.
- e) Employment: Ryan handed out job descriptions for both Fueller and Community Outreach/Mobility Specialist. He asked everyone to share the positions when out in the community and talking with people who are looking for jobs.
- f) Retirement: Ryan announced that Gil (Travel Trainer) will be retiring. His last day will be Friday, 7/20 and there will be a reception from 1-4pm at the Mobility Center.
- g) Newsletter: Ryan highlighted the monthly newsletter which was passed out to everyone.
- h) Annual Statewide Bus Roadeo: Ryan announced that over the past weekend, the Minnesota Public Transit Association (MPTA) held the annual bus roadeo in Duluth, MN. There were four operators competing from Metro Bus (two from fixed route and two from Dial-a-Ride). Todd D. from Dial-a-Ride placed first place in the small bus division and Chris O. placed sixth. Mike K. placed sixth and Jerry S. placed seventh in large bus division.

Open Discussion.

Bruce mentioned the No Smoking Signs have been removed from the shelters by the YMCA.

Jenny mentioned she has been working later hours again at her job and she rides Route 6 but the past few nights she has gotten on and asked the bus driver if she could transfer to Route 22 mid route on E. St. Germain because the last bus is leaving at 8:45 pm to get her home. Some of the drivers have told her they can't do that anymore or they will get in trouble, but some drivers will do it. Jerry said there was a memo a while ago saying that they can't radio because the times don't actually meet up. Jerry personally feels this is a route that should be done that way. He recommended changing the times at McDonald's East by a few minutes earlier so they can make connections with Route 22 by the old Holiday station on E. St. Germain.

Doug mentioned this is one of the things he's been discussing with Shawn P. There used to be a lot more traffic with the oil trains coming thru on E. St. Germain, so extra time was added in for all of the routes that crossed on the tracks on E. St. Germain. The traffic has now slowed considerably and changes of getting a train are much less so there needs to be discussion on pulling some time out of the affected routes.

Jenny mentioned that the stop annunciation isn't always working on Bus #714. It announces way after it passes the stop by Stearns Manufacturing (Coleman).

Bruce mentioned the students getting on at the Area Learning Center (McKinley school in Waite Park) are using a lot of foul language. Jerry commented he talked with some of the Duluth Transit operators when he was at the State Bus Roadeo about this topic. He said the operator warns the person to stop using foul language, if it continues, they will have to get off the bus, and if they refuse to get off, they are issued a trespass notice. He feels if there is constant foul language, it is a code of conduct violation, and then it becomes a trespass issue. Ryan stated the current policy is if there is a group of individuals on the bus and they are making it unsafe for the operator to do their job, then the operator will notify a street supervisor, they will come to the bus on route, and address the situation. If the individual (s) continue to cause the same disturbance day after day, then the police will get involved and they will be trespassed.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 10:01 a.m.