

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held a meeting on Tuesday, October 16, 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: Jill Justin, Kim Hoff, Doug Diedrichsen, Dale Abraham, Brenda Severson, Bruce Benner, Jenny Svihel and Aisha Bah. Absent: David Williamson, Suzanne Driessen and Alexis Lutgen. Visitors: Vicki Johnson– St. Cloud APO and Jerry Schmitz.

Welcome. Doug welcomed everyone and read the purpose of the RAC. Everyone introduced themselves. Kim introduced Jill as the new RAC meeting organizer.

#### Public Open Forum. Open Discussion.

Bruce questioned what a public open forum is. Kim stated that the public is invited to attend RAC meetings, and this time is for any member of the public to address the committee.

Jerry questioned whether the city would put in a crosswalk for pedestrians to cross 2<sup>nd</sup> Street South from the WalMart bus stop to get to the Costco store. Doug stated that he was involved with the city planners on this topic, and it was determined that the traffic flow is too heavy to install a crosswalk. No new bus stops will be added to serve Costco at this time.

#### Old Business.

Operational Update. Doug mentioned that on 10/19/18, Metro Bus will participate in the Pumpkinfest at Lake George. Our 'haunted trolley' will be onsite, staffed with Metro Bus employees. Also on 10/19/18, the Mobility and Training Center will serve as a stop on the Downtown Art Crawl. The November RAC meeting will be held at Operations, 665 Franklin Ave NE. This will give members an opportunity to see the newly remodeled Board Room.

The CNG Champion bus that has experienced door seal issues is on hold at Hoglund Bus. The issue is expected to be corrected, with bus delivery taking place in the near future.

#### New Business.

- 1) Ridership. Doug reported that ridership trends are continuing as expected. Routes 1 and 2 remain as top performing routes, with Route 8 now at the top of the list. This increase is due to the return of SCSU students to the community. Route 32 continues to have the lowest ridership. The proposed ConneX service was approved by the board, and will be replacing Route 32. This service will operate on a trial basis from 1/2/19 to 6/30/19. Details on this service will be

made available to the public as it is determined by the route restructure committee.

- 2) RAC Terms. There are 8 positions on the RAC committee. Seven are currently filled, with the 1 and 2 year terms for all these expiring in November 2018. Suzanne will step down as a member. Brenda, Bruce, Aisha and Jenny agreed to extend their terms for 2 more years. Absent members David and Alexis will be contacted regarding their terms. A minimum of two positions remain open at this time. Anyone interested in becoming a member should contact Ryan. Strategies for filling committee openings will be discussed in the future.
- 3) RAC Email. There was no email.
- 4) Maintenance Department Update—Dale Abraham: Dale mentioned that there is an open full time mechanic position. The department is still getting their work done. When the open position is filled, Dale will be able to spend less time in the mechanic role. There are 2 Arboc buses that smoke excessively. New exhaust parts are on order, and will be installed to eliminate this issue. These buses, and 1 DAR bus are being updated for use on the new ConneX service. No remaining DAR buses have lifts, all are equipped with ramps.

Open Discussion. Doug stated that the CNG Champion bus currently at Hoglund Bus will be the primary bus for the ConneX service. Three additional small buses will be used as back up. These buses are older buses, and may experience more maintenance issues. Bruce questioned the connections between the ConneX bus and other routes. The route restructure committee is working on these details, and many others, including changing the Route 31 from a 30 minute route to a 60 minute route. Jerry questioned how customers would need to request the ConneX service. Doug stated that customers would need to call dispatch for a ride, and could state that they need to be at their destination at a specific time (an appointment time) and dispatch would determine the pick up time, or the customer could request a specific pick up time. Riders can only call in up to 1 hour in advance, and no subscriptions will be available at this time. Doug also stated that some of these details will be determined by the software capabilities. Jerry asked what the driver would be doing if there were no requested rides. Doug stated that the driver would be staged in a common location, so as to be ready when a ride is requested. Multiple mock runs of this service are planned in November and December so that any bugs can be worked out in advance. The ConneX service is a part of the Fixed Route system, and the fare structure is the same as the other fixed routes. A rebid will determine the operators of this service. This service will be advertised in the community as the details are finalized. The city of Sartell has been promoting the service on our behalf also. This service will operate as a curb-to-curb service, utilizing public roads only. Current bus stop signs will not be removed, but rather changed to indicate that the stop is inactive and inform the public of the ConneX service. In the event that the ConneX service becomes permanent, bus stops would be removed at that

time. No shelters will be impacted, as the Route 31 will service all the existing shelters. Doug also stated that other transit systems with this type of service were researched during the planning stages, and this trial run will serve as a model for possible use in other areas of our service.

Bruce mentioned that he called to schedule a DAR ride, but the dispatcher did not give her name. He also asked for clarification on what he should state as an appointment time, being he needs some extra time to get to his specific location. Kim advised him to build in any time he needs to get from the drop off point to his appointment location and use that as his appointment time.

Jerry stated that on Route 2, the Tech College stop is announced twice and on Route 33, it is announced later than it should be.

Doug reminded the committee again that the November RAC meeting will be held at Operations.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:52 a.m.