

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held a meeting on Tuesday, June 18, 2019 at 9:00 am at the Mobility Training Center, 700 W St Germain, Cloud, MN.

The following individuals were present: Ryan Daniel, Doug Diedrichsen, Kim Hoff, Bruce Benner, David Williamsen, Jenny Svihel, Jan Scott and Alexis Lutgen. Absent: Aisha Bah and Paul Thomas. Visitors: Vicki Williams--St Cloud APO, Leif Spore – Metro Bus Operator.

Welcome. Ryan welcomed everyone and read the purpose of the RAC.

Public Open Forum. Open Discussion.
There was none.

Old Business.

Open Committee Positions:

- a) Ryan stated there is still one Fixed Route position unfilled. Jenny commented that she talked to a possible candidate who sent in their application but they have not been contacted by anyone yet. Ryan will look into it.
- b) Ryan mentioned there has been discussion internally about changing the meeting time to better accommodate everyone's schedules. He asked the group if there would be a problem changing the time to 10:00 am instead of 9:00 am. There was no opposition to the change, so the July meeting will start at 10:00 am.

New Business.

- 1) RAC email. There was none.
- 2) ConneX. Ryan asked if anyone has used ConneX yet. Jan mentioned she had told a friend about it that recently moved in at David Day Apartments. She had not heard about it but has since used it. Kim stated that her and Debbie had been to the apartments a few months ago and presented information about ConneX to the residents. Ryan explained that Metro Bus is going to be doing more advertising since the pilot program has been extended through December. He mentioned we have purchased two ads that rotate on the digital billboard on Pinecone Road by the entrance to the United Methodist church. He stated there will be two buses out during the day starting on July 1st. Based on previous ridership it was determined that peak times differed from other regular fixed routes. Bus passes are currently sold at both of the Coborn's in Sartell, but we are looking at also selling them at the Sartell Community Center.
- 3) Ridership—Doug Diedrichson. The SCSU routes which were taking the top spots in performance have dropped because students have gone home for the summer. Routes 1 and 2 have jumped back to top positions with Route 6 taking the 3rd place spot. The lowest performing route remains the ConneX but the numbers are trending up. There were an additional 25 riders last month compared to the previous month. Route 10 is the 2nd lowest performing route. Dial-a-Ride continues to grow, but there are not as many PCA's riding.

Open discussion:

Jenny said that people are still complaining about #10 and #33 because the driver isn't able to radio ahead for transfers.

Jenny commented that the trip planner isn't working. She tried to use it on her phone and would put in where she was at and where she wanted to go, and it only listed one route instead of other options. It listed detours on it first, and then you have to push a different thing and then it will say the routes/schedules but it doesn't show the locations where the bus stops. There was discussion about using a desktop versus mobile phone when looking at the website. The phone doesn't work as well. Doug stated that he doesn't think the website has been mobile optimized yet so it won't work as well on the phone. The reason for not doing this is because the next step is to have an app and they don't want to spend money to optimize it. Doug said he would talk with Nate in Marketing to see if there is something that can be done to make it work better.

Bruce said the Dial-a-Ride operators have to walk around the bus before backing up and they don't feel they should have to be in situations where they need to back up. Leif explained a walk behind is common in any transit industry, and sometimes there is a need to back up and there isn't anyone there that can assist.

Jenny asked how often the buses are being cleaned because some of them are pretty dirty. She wondered what the cleaning schedule was. Ryan stated they are looking at outside sources versus in-house cleaning because we are having problems with staffing. The buses get washed Monday, Wednesday and Friday and in the wintertime, that schedule is increased. The interiors of the buses are supposed to be cleaned every day but currently we are short staffed. We currently have two cleaners, two people have resigned in the past month.

Bruce mentioned that because the weather is nice and a lot of people are out walking their dogs, they are putting their dog waste in the garbage of the bus shelters and it smells horrible. Ryan explained that we have one part-time shelter cleaner and one full-time facility specialist. There was a time in the past when we were short on fueler staff that we paid a premium wage for supervisors and operators to work extra shifts and help fuel the buses. This may have to be done again and ask for help in cleaning the buses. He thanked everyone for their patience.

Janet commented that she used the Link and Northstar train for the first time to go to a Twins game. She was disappointed that there wasn't any Dial-a-Ride service available when she got back to St. Cloud. Ryan explained that the Northstar Link service is a totally different type of service compared to our regular Metro Bus service. According to the FTA, it is considered a commuter bus and we are not required to provide Dial-a-Ride service for a commuter service. Metro Bus doesn't own the Northstar service, but we have a contract with four counties to operate the service. If we provided Dial-a-Ride service, then the counties would have to pay extra for that. He was not speaking for the counties, but it was his feeling that they would not be willing to go above and beyond.

Ryan thanked everyone for coming and reminded them that the July meeting will be at 10:00 am.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 am.