

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held an in-person meeting at the Mobility Training Center and streamed simultaneously on WebEx on Tuesday January 17th, 2023, at 10:04 AM. The meeting was held to speak bus stop maintenance, discuss more updates about changes to the ConneX, hear about a ridership update, discuss winter weather safety, hear about what goes into service requests, and various other questions.

The following individuals attended: Michael Kedrowski, Ryan Daniel, Kellen Rasmussen, David Williamsen, Bruce Benner, Vicki Johnson, Kelly Carlson. Absent: Jenny Svihel, Paul Thomas, Keshia Anderson-King & Jan Scott.

Welcome. Michael thanked everyone for coming and reviewed the purpose of the RAC.

Public Open Forum.

- 1) None

Old Business:

- 1) RAC Emails - None
- 2) Review of October Minutes - The meeting was held to speak about a ridership update, discuss updates about changes to the ConneX, hear about the APO's long-range surface transportation plan (Metropolitan Transportation Plan or MTP), discuss how the Jolly Trolley went, and various questions.
- 3) Bus Stop Maintenance
 - a. Metro Bus staff is doing all they can to keep up with what is necessary to keep stops accessible and shelters clean and free of snow and debris.
 - b. We are responsible for most shelters.
 - c. Individual stops are mostly the responsibility of the business or individual in front of the stop.
- 4) Route 32/ConneX
 - a. Effective Sunday, May 7, Metro Bus Fixed Route 32 will resume service in Sartell. The ConneX on-demand service trial will end at that time.
 - b. Route 32 will hub from the Sartell Walmart and run hourly from 6 AM-7 PM on weekdays and 8 AM-4 PM on weekends.
 - c. This Route will form an hourly loop through Sartell and return to Walmart each hour.
 - d. The Route will also serve the Sartell High School three times each weekday.
 - e. Public informational meetings will be held Monday, February 13 at 1 PM and again at 4:30 PM in the Sartell City Council Chambers.
 - i. Community members are encouraged to attend the meetings to learn more about the upcoming change.

New Business:

- 1) **Ridership Update**- There was a slight decline in ridership in December as compared to November.
 - a. Routes with the largest decreases were routes 4, 8, 10 and 11 with decreases of more than 10% percent.
 - b. There were several others with decreases of 5-9%.
 - c. Route 6 had an increase of 2%.
 - d. ConneX ridership was 1,038.
 - e. Northstar link had 887.
 - f. Dial a ride had 11,143 rides provided.

- 2) **Winter Weather Safety** - These are seven safe riding tips we recommend you take into consideration when you ride Metrobus during winter weather:
 - a. Plan extra time in your commute. During periods of heavy snow and ice, buses, like traffic, may fall behind schedule. Passengers are encouraged to plan extra time into their commute.
 - b. Use the Trip Planner feature on our website to find the most convenient routes and plan your trip in advance!
 - c. Be cautious when boarding in areas with ice and snowbanks. In areas covered with snow and ice or blocked by a snowbank, please wait back on the sidewalk, or at a cleared driveway or corner. DO NOT stand in the street or wait at the top of a snowbank.
 - d. Try to clean off snow from shoes prior to boarding the bus. Keeping shoes as clean as possible before boarding the bus helps prevent the bus floors from getting wet and slippery.
 - e. Be careful when boarding buses. Wait until the bus has come to a complete stop before trying to board. Melting snow and ice can make bus floors slippery. Make sure to hold handrails when boarding, walking, or standing inside the bus.
 - f. Avoid crowding the curb line as the bus approaches the bus stop. Standing too close to the curb is always dangerous, but even more so during inclement weather.
 - g. Take extra measures when commuting at night. Hold a flashlight so that the driver can see you waiting at a stop. If possible, wear reflective apparel or safety bands on your coat or other clothing. Reflective clothing is always recommended for children when traveling at night.
 - h. Remember to always dress appropriately for the weather. What you wear can make a significant impact on how wintry weather affects you. Watching the local news for the forecast is one of the easiest ways to stay informed on upcoming weather and how to prepare for it.

3) **What goes into service requests?**

- a. Michael detailed a few aspects that go into additional service and new stop requests.
 - i. There are specific requirements Metro Bus needs to follow; unfortunately, it is not always as easy as putting a sign in the ground or having a bus pick someone up.
 - 1. There are curb requirements, stopping distances, and safety/accessibility requirements in respect to ADA needs.
 - 2. Metro Bus investigate things such as how can bus access this location? Where can/should it stop? Will there be any traffic impacts at various times of the day? How close is this to other stops on the same route? Can it connect with other stops? And more...
 - 3. Additionally, when it comes to services like Dial-a-Ride there are certain distances we can travel from current routes, and it can be difficult or complicated to step outside of those boundaries.
 - ii. Requests are taken frequently and forwarded to the correct and are put into consideration when possible.
 - 1. Metro Bus staff usually try to follow up within 24-48 hours with a response, or at least some factors being investigated.
 - iii. Do not let anyone think their voice is not heard, it takes a lot to get things done and take time but if done right or they make sense implementation is possible... eventually.

4) **Open Discussion:**

- a. Vicki requested an update on how things are coming along with the Long-Range Plan
 - i. Michael noted that there is not a kickoff meeting scheduled yet, but next quarter it is hopeful that data collection will start.
 - ii. He stated that he will keep the group, especially Vicki informed.
- b. Michael will work to get minutes sent out to members of the RAC once completed as well as making sure they are posted on the website within a few days after the meeting.

5) **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 10:25 AM.