

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held an in-person meeting at the Mobility Training Center and streamed simultaneously on Microsoft Teams on Tuesday December 19th, 2023, at 10:07 AM. The meeting was held to discuss ridership updates, hear new updates about Metro Bus's Long Range Transit Plan, hear results from the Jolly Trolley, discuss service hours, as well as various other questions.

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

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 discuss ridership updates, hear updates about Metro Bus's Long Range Transit Plan, discuss the Metro bus Forward Survey, and receive an end of the fiscal year update, as well as various other questions.

New Business:

- 1) Ridership Update
 - a. November:
 - i. Most routes recorded decreases in ridership compared to October, the largest being route 33 with a decrease of nearly 17%.
 - ii. Routes 5 and 10 remained stable with little to no decrease from month to month.
 - iii. The NorthStar Link recorded 1,120 rides (a 12% change) and that was down 155 from last month.
 - iv. Dial-a-Ride is just over 12,000 rides.
 - b. October:
 - i. Ridership increases were up compared to September.
 1. Route 21 saw nearly a 10% increase. Several others saw increases from 5-10%.
 2. Route 32 saw a decrease of 11%, totaling about 70 rides.
 3. The North Star Link recorded an increase of 15% and provided 1275 rides.
 4. Dial-a-Ride recorded nearly 13,000 rides!
- 2) Long Range Plan Updates – The Long-Range Transit Plan Update (Metro Bus Forward) initiative continues to move along.
 - a. There is a dedicated space on our website, ridemetrobus.com/forward, in which you can view the project timeline and updates regarding plan are located there.
 - i. Buses now have automatic passenger counters or APCs.
 1. APCs are passenger counters using a beam of lights to detect a passenger and count them as they enter and exit the bus.
 - a. They can differentiate between wheelchairs, strollers, carts and bags so they are not counted.

2. This will be used to help count ridership, but also to allow for a detailed overview of Metro Bus service numbers for the long-range plan.
 - ii. The project will be in another data gathering phase as live data comes in over the next few months.
- 3) Jolly Trolley - For the second consecutive year, the Jolly Trolley set a record for monetary AND non-perishable donations collected!
- a. The record totals collected this year include \$4,484 and 12,726 pounds of non-perishables!
 - b. Over the last 13 years, the Jolly Trolley Food Drive has distributed a total of 29 tons of non-perishables and over \$30,000.
 - c. This year the Jolly Trolley also made a “stop” at the Tri-County Humane Society, delivering pallets of dog food and treats for our furry friends in need.
 - d. It was asked where one can drop off donations of money or food outside the on site location nights.
 - i. Michael will follow up on that but mentioned that there are drop boxes at several sponsor locations and if someone is unsure but wants to donate, donations can be donated to organizations directly such as Catholic Charities Emergency Services, the Promise Neighborhood of Central MN and the St. Cloud Area Salvation Army.
 - e. Thank you to those of you who were able to volunteer, and to those who donated and helped spread the word!
- 4) Service Hours - Metro Bus Dial-a-Ride and Fixed Route services will be closed on Christmas Day and New Year’s Day.
- a. Fixed Route and Dial-a-Ride service will also end early on Christmas Eve.
 - b. No Dial-a-Ride service will be scheduled after 5:30 PM and all Fixed Route buses will be off the road by 6 PM.
 - c. Metro Bus will operate regular service on New Year’s Eve.
 - d. Regular hours are:
 - i. Fixed Route:
 1. 5 AM and end as late as 10:43 PM on Weekdays
 2. 7:45 AM to 7:12 PM on Saturdays
 3. 8:45 AM to 6:12 PM on Sundays.
 - ii. Dial-a-Ride
 1. 5 AM – 10:15 PM on Weekdays
 2. 7:45 AM to 6:30 PM on Saturdays
 3. 8:45 AM to 5:45 PM on Sundays.
 - iii. NorthStar Link
 1. Northbound buses leave Big Lake Park and Ride, and proceed to stop at Becker, the East St. Cloud Park and Ride, the Transit Center and SCSU.
 - a. Departure times are at: 5:30, 7:00, 7:50 AM and 4:40, 5:30 and 6:50 PM.
 2. Southbound buses leave the Transit Center and proceed on their route to SCSU, The East St. Cloud Park and Ride and Becker ending at the Big Lake Park and Ride.

- a. Departure times are: 4:25, 5:55 6:45 AM and 3:35, 4:25 and 5:45 PM.
3. Check schedules for other stop times located on all buses, transit stations and locations around town as well as:
<https://catchthelink.com/schedules/route-887/>

5) Open Discussion

- a. It was brought up that a passenger was overheard complimenting how nice it is to ride a newer Dial a Ride bus. It was then asked when new buses may be arriving. Vicki works with the APO, which helps organize the programming of funds and helped provide the following information:
 - i. Fixed route buses programed for replacement in 2020, have been delayed due to supply chain issues and have not made it into service yet.
 - ii. Some new Dial-a-ride buses should be arriving this year.
 - iii. All buses are on regular replacement schedule to replace other aging buses, it has not yet recovered and will become more regular once balanced.
- b. Metro Bus CEO Wins Prestigious Safety Award
 - i. Metro Bus is proud to announce CEO Ryan I. Daniel has been named as the World Safety Organization's (WSO) J. Peter Cunliffe Transportation Award winner for 2023.
 - ii. The award recognizes an "active member of the WSO, who has shown above average skills in leadership, and supervision of transportation programs, etc." and "who exhibits total dedication and commitment to the protection of people, property, resources, and the environment through participation and personal involvement in professional safety activities."

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 10:55 AM