

The St. Cloud Metro Bus Rider Advisory Committee (RAC) held a meeting on Tuesday, July 16, 2019 at 10:00 am at the Mobility Training Center, 700 W St Germain, Cloud, MN.

The following individuals were present: Doug Diedrichsen, Jill Justin, Bruce Benner, Jenny Svihel, and Jan Scott. Absent: Ryan Daniel, Aisha Bah, Alexis Lutgen, David Williamsen and Paul Thomas. Visitor: Kelly Carlson.

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

Public Open Forum. Open Discussion.

Bruce asked what public open discussion was. Doug explained that RAC meetings are open to the public, and this time is for any member of the public who would like to address the committee. There was no open discussion.

Old Business.

Welcome New Members:

Doug welcomed Kelly Carlson to the meeting. Kelly has completed an application, and pending a background check and her acceptance of the position, she will join the RAC committee representing Fixed Route. Bruce has been reclassified as a Fixed Route representative, but will continue to bring forward issues on both services.

New Business.

- 1) RAC email. There was none.
- 2) Ridership—Doug Diedrichson. Route 1 had the top ridership with 20.5 riders per hour and Route 2 had 18.5 per hour. Routes 4 and 6 were tied for the next slot with @17 riders per hour. Routes 6/7, 8 and 9 continue to be lower than usual due to SCSU being on summer break. The lowest performing route remains the ConneX, but there were approximately 100 additional rides provided in June over May. The U Go Free program likely contributed to this increase. Routes 10 and 33 continue to be the other lowest performing routes. The Trolley, used mainly for Summertime by George on Wednesdays, is up significantly from last year with 17 riders per hour. Dial-a-Ride is up across the board, with the biggest increases in ridership on Sundays.
- 3) Volunteers for Benton County Fair. Metro Bus will again have an informational booth in the hockey arena at the Fair. Doug passed around a sign-up sheet for volunteers to indicate their availability. The Marketing department will determine a schedule and will contact the volunteers to let them know what their scheduled time will be. Jan asked what the responsibilities of volunteers would be at this event. Doug stated that volunteers would be interacting with the public by answering questions, promoting our services—including Northstar Link and the U Go Free program, and giving away promotional items. There will always be at least one Metro Bus employee to assist if there are more complex questions. This is also an opportunity to collect feedback from the public.

Open discussion:

Bruce questioned why Route 5 continues to run late regularly despite the fact that school is not in session. He again suggested that an adjustment be made near Wacosa to save some time on the route. Doug stated that any Route changes or adjustments are being kept at bay due to the continuation of the Connex service until 12/31/19. Routes 5, 10, 3 and 33 are on the list for changes when the time comes. There are a variety of small and large spots in the service area that will need tweaking, and these will be addressed in the future. A recent change to the Armer radio system will also impact route changes. This radio system allows for only minimal radio traffic, and policies are still being determined at this time. Doug also mentioned that riders are the main driving force behind any changes.

Jan suggested offering free ride coupons to appreciate customers who have been vocal and enthusiastic about the Connex service. Doug will bring the idea of giving RAC members coupons to give out at their discretion to Ryan and Dave.

Bruce noted that there is a shelter near the St Cloud Surgical Center with the glass broken out. He questioned whether that was going to be replaced. Doug will check in with Maintenance on this. Bruce also noted that the fence near the Sartell Wal-Mart is very wobbly and wondered who was responsible for it. This is Wal-Mart's responsibility.

Doug stated that he would like to come up with a resource sheet for our customers before snow season returns. It would include who to contact when there are snow removal issues. Jan stated that she personally waited an hour and a half for a medical return, while another customer waited two hours. She felt this was an unacceptable amount of time to wait for a ride and questioned what was acceptable. Since Dial-a-Ride is a complementary service, one should expect to get home on a Dial-a-Ride bus in near to the same amount of time it would take to get home using the Fixed Route service. Doug mentioned that some Dial-a-Ride customers are choosing to use the Connex service to return home from medical appointments instead of waiting for a Dial-a-Ride bus. Jill suggested that Jan encourage persons who wait an unacceptable amount of time to call customer service and file a complaint. This allows Metro Bus to see and address the issue. Doug stated that Berta has been looking at this issue. He may invite her and/or Shawn Pierce (Fixed Route Operations Manager) to a future meeting to inform the committee on their respective areas.

Bruce asked about the 50 years of service celebration. Doug stated there is a committee working on the commemoration activities, but beyond that, not much more is known. The committee will be informed as events are scheduled.

Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.