



MINUTES

Joint Meeting of the Central Maryland Transportation & Mobility Commission and the Central Maryland Transportation & Mobility Consortium

September 27, 2022

Judith Davis called the meeting to order at 1:00pm. Present were:

Commissioner Members:

Judith Davis (Vice Chair)
Christine Wells
Ron Skotz
Michael Dyer
Robert Love
Claudia Barber
Crystal McGill-Belk

Staff:

Jason Quan, RTA
Josh Drucker, RTA
Gabrielle Tibbs, RTA
Shawn O'Meara, RTA
Preston Reed, RTA
Phillip Asher, RTA
Rushad Dastur, RTA
Bruce Gartner, Howard County
Carrie Anderson-Watters, Howard County
Astamay Curtis, RAC Chair

Commissioners Not Present:

Vic Weissberg, Prince George's County
Allen Cornell (Chair)

1. Welcome – Judith Davis

2. Open Public Comment Period – None

3. Bus Delivery Update – Jason Quan

- The bus delivery of 11 new transit busses has a new date of delivery for mid-December 2022
- The nine new paratransit vehicles (cut-aways) will arrive by the end of 2022
- There are additional orders for the purchase of 3 more new buses, as well as several new paratransit sedans

4. Free-Fare Holiday Update – Jason Quan

- The free-fare campaign, which started September 1, ends October 31
 - ◊ Riders are pleased with the campaign and taking full advantage of it.

- ◆ There has been a small spike in paratransit ridership.
- Howard County, public schools, and community college students can continue to ride free for the remainder of the year.
 - ◇ The Howard County Department of Transportation subsidizes payment.
- Christine suggested that local venues make the community aware of using RTA's bus route services during special community events by adding a note on tickets, flyers, posters, etc.

5. November Service Changes – Jason Quan

- 90% of the approved 2021 service changes will start on November 13, 2022.
 - ◇ RTA will begin to return to pre-covid service hours as a result of:
 - ◆ Route restructuring
 - ◆ Extended evening and weekend services
 - ◆ Increased frequency of bus arrivals/departures
- The remaining 10% of the approved 2021 service changes will start on January 1, 2023. They include:
 - ◇ New & expanded services for routes 405 & 505
 - ◆ The implementation of these services will rely on additional staff and CDL bus operators

6. GM Report – Jason Quan

- **HUMAN RESOURCES**
 - ◇ New Safety and Training Manager, Mr. Rushad Dastur
 - ◇ RTA's Ms. Rebecca Casseus is the new Safety and Training Instructor
 - ◇ Mr. Jim Rippeon is no longer the AGM of Maintenance.
 - ◇ Mr. Phil Asher (previously an RTA Maintenance Shift Supervisor) is the new RTA Maintenance Manager.
 - ◇ Recruitment efforts are still ongoing for fixed route (CDL) drivers, part-time Customer Service Representatives (CSRs), a Grants and Procurement Specialist, a Planning and Special Project Manager, an Executive Assistant, Operations Supervisors, Dispatchers, and a Recruitment Specialist.
 - ◆ The HR department created the Recruitment Specialist position to assist recruitment efforts, focusing on recruiting qualified bus operators/drivers. The role will allow the HR Manager to develop and improve other HR tasks and strategies.
 1. RTA's CDL Training Program has produced a handful of qualified CDL drivers, which is allowing RTA to implement the upcoming service changes in November
 2. It is important to note that recruitment for paratransit drivers is not a significant focus as there is always a large pool of applicants to choose from

- **EMPLOYEE APPRECIATION DAY**

- ◇ Employee Appreciation Day, held on August 11, was well received by employees.
 - ◆ Employees received service awards that Howard County Government and County Executive Calvin Ball signed.
 - ◆ RTA Employee of the Month and Employee of the Year certificates were awarded (RTA employees select recipients)
 - ◆ Several RTA Commissioner members and Howard County Government Office of Transportation staff also attended the event

- **‘RISE TO THE CHALLENGE’ RECOGNITION**

- ◇ RTA was among several other Howard County organizations, persons, services, and first responders that Howard County Government recognized for uninterrupted, necessary assistance during the COVID-19 pandemic
 - ◆ RTA received an award from Howard County Government, County Executive Calvin Ball
 1. The award/plaque was returned to the RTA facility and shared with the RTA team.

- **OPERATIONS/SERVICE**

- ◇ Monthly ridership has been averaging 50,000 one-way trips.
- ◇ FY2022 fixed route ridership to reach 603,000 one-way trips.
- ◇ Monthly paratransit ridership has been averaging 5,600 one-way trips.
- ◇ FY2022 paratransit ridership to reach 60,000 one-way trips
- ◇ On-time performance is 74%; the goal is to get to 85%-90%
- ◇ Summer is always challenging regarding maintenance and road calls. Most of the road calls are a result of the following issues:
 - ◆ Emissions
 - ◆ Cooling line issues
 - ◆ Oil consumption/leak issues
 - ◆ An older fleet
 1. The scheduled addition of the eleven new buses will reduce maintenance and roll call-related issues.
- ◇ Bus Technology
 - ◆ The Automatic Passenger Counter (APC) Project is pending certification by Maryland Transportation Administration (MTA)
 1. MTA requires an accuracy of 95%; we are currently at 85% accuracy of being able to record/track the number of passengers on a given bus
 2. Once certification is received, we will submit it for the Federal Transit Administration’s (FTA) validation.

- ◆ Automatic Stop Announcement is in the pilot testing phase, and we are working with the vendor to address some minor software issues.
- ◆ Bus Crowding Data is published live to the Transit App.
 1. The crowding data works in collaboration with the APC software.
 1. Crowded categories are ‘light’, ‘moderate’, and ‘crowded.’
 2. Routes 401 and 501 tend to be crowded rides.
- ◆ RTA’s Transit App users continue to grow
 1. The Transit App also ties into RTA’s mobile ticketing application.
- **SAFETY**
 - ◇ RTA experienced a total of 8 preventable and non-preventable vehicle accidents this Quarter, which is two accidents less than FY2022, 4th Quarter, which had 10.
 - ◇ RTA operator accidentally hit a pole with their tail swing while departing from the bus stop.
 - ◆ No one was injured.
 - ◇ Non-Preventable Accident Summary
 - ◆ RTA vehicle was sideswiped
 - ◆ RTA vehicle was reversed into
 - ◆ RTA vehicle was rear-ended
 - ◇ RTA experienced one major passenger incident.
 - ◇ RTA experienced 0 non-major passenger incident
 - ◇ Mr. Dyer expressed his concern about congested traffic along 4th Street/Montrose due to the RTA bus stop. He suggested a possible solution is to move the stop to a nearby parking lot.

7. QUORUM

- The motion to approve the CMTMC minutes from June 28, 2022, was approved by committee members

8. FY 2022 End-of-Year Budget Summary – Shawn O’Meara

- Total Revenue for FY2022 was \$820,000; this is \$227,000 more than the budget
 - ◇ We had forecasted that we would be \$850,000, so we are close to the forecast.
 - ◇ Fixed-route revenue was 13% (higher than we anticipated)
 - ◇ Paratransit was 137% (higher than we expected)
- Total expenses came in at just over \$15 million (FY 2022 budget was \$17.1 million; so, it is \$2 million less)
 - ◇ The difference is that we anticipated being back to full service by July 1, but that did not happen
 - ◇ Out of that \$2 million, 70% is personnel expenses
 - ◇ The remaining 30% is non-personnel maintenance expenses (i.e., outside service repairs, parts, etc.)
- The Partner Operating Subsidy budget was reduced from the original budget (we did that beginning FY 2022)

- RTA's net surplus is \$68,000. This was calculated by taking the 'Revenue', minus 'Total Expense', plus the 'Partner Operating Subsidy, and depreciation.

9. RAC Minutes – Astamay Curtis

- Jorge expressed frustration with late buses and service interruptions.
- Astamay expressed concern about paratransit trips not necessarily being on time for dialysis patients.
 - ◇ Joshua noted Astamay's concern and expressed that while RTA is active in reducing late pickups, factors such as congested traffic & accidents, bad weather, etc., remain a challenge.
 - ◇ When RTA's dispatchers are made aware of a paratransit pickup running late, Columbia Cab company intervenes; however, Columbia Cab is currently understaffed, which can cause delays.
 - ◇ Astamay offered her resignation from the RAC.
 - ◆ The consensus of the CMTMC team is that Astamay has been an asset to the team.

10. Next Commission Meeting (12/13/2022) – Jason Quan

11. Adjournment

Next Regular Commission Meeting – Tuesday, March 28th, 2023, 1:00PM

RAC Meeting – (meetings.transitRTA.com/RAC)

Acronyms

AAC	Anne Arundel County
PGC	Prince George's County
RTA	Regional Transportation Agency
RAC	Riders Advisory Council