



Meeting Minutes

Riders' Advisory Council June 22, 2022

In Attendance:

Riders / Public

Astamaymay Curtis
Jorge Tirigall
Durteha Smith
Marlene Hendler

RTA Staff

Josh Drucker
Preston Reed

Partner Staff / Commissioners

Carrie Anderson-Watters

1. Approval of February 22, 2022 meeting minutes

The RAC meeting was held on February 22, 2022, via Zoom with three RAC members.

2. RTA Announcements

- The staffing changes included a welcome to Joshua Drucker, Planning & Special Projects Manager, and Preston Reed, Public Transit Marketing & Outreach Specialist. Also, management is interviewing candidates for the Assistant Manager's position, and in the meantime, other team members handle the duties of the job.
- By the fall of 2022, the RTA expects the delivery of 26 new vehicles, including 11 regular buses, nine cutaways, and six mobility sedans, all of which are contingent upon supply chain issues.
- A few minor service changes went into effect on February 6, 2022. RTA bus schedules will return to normal as the COVID impact becomes more manageable.
- Due to the January 2022 hiring event, RTA's human resources department sent out 20 offer letters. In addition, the RTA continues to post positions for drivers and other personnel on its website and utilizes other hiring tools for hiring and retaining personnel.

3. Public Comment

- Astamay asked for an update on the proposed service expansion, to which Joshua advised that nothing had changed. It is still on hold pending driver availability.
- Gorge asked if the last mall departures will return to 10 & 11 Pm (the pre-pandemic departure times). Joshua replied that all services would eventually resume to the pre-pandemic levels.
- In reading the minutes and then listening to the audio, there was some confusion or misunderstanding of the question. Astamay's question was not correctly stated and was relevant to whether mobility ridership was starting to increase because several fixed route lines were using RTA's mobility vehicles. Joshua's response was concerning the total year-to-date ridership of the fixed-route. (Since this February's meeting, the taxi service has been reinstated, alleviating a possible vehicle shortage.)
- Duretha wanted to know if the RTA knew why the Ft. Mead Base entrance gate changed and what was the ruling on 'authorized access' to gain entry onto the base. Howard County Executive's Office became aware of the matter.
- Doretha inquired why RTA mobility drivers are not allowed to drop riders at the COVID Testing Tent at Howard Hospital. Joshua stated this policy predated his employment, but he would look into the concern and report back to RAC. (This question was misleading because you are not supposed to be transported if you have symptoms. This question was relevant to requiring testing before a medical procedure or surgery.)
- Jorge inquired about the possibility of the RTA reinstating the color-coded system as was used before the numerical method. Joshua stated that the change was made because of the trend among transit agencies to have one color represent each agency, making it easier for passengers to distinguish between the agencies and making it less confusing by having the vehicles show the start and end designations. However, based on Jorge's request, it is undetermined if the LED lights can flash in the color of the old route colors. Astamay commented that color coding may benefit a few visually impaired riders but may not be possible because of new & revised routes.
- Duretha wanted to know if *Columbia Taxicab* had contracted with RTA. Joshua confirmed the cab service is supplementing the RTA Mobility Service.
- Astamay shared an incident where she had experienced a frustrating cab trip because she did not know a cab had been sent for her return trip. She missed the driver's call and stood outside about 10 feet from the cab for about 10-15 minutes. As she was about to call dispatch, she decided to ask the driver of the white sedan who was sitting there the whole time, if he was a cab. After he checked the name, it was her driver, but she was unaware it was a cab because the driver did not have a magnetic company sign (drivers can use their white sedans but are supposed to put the magnetic company sign on the door). The second time a cab was sent for her was a black sedan without a sign. Joshua commented that he would check on the policy and report back to RAC.

- If riders are notified to expect a cab, that only happens if the request is scheduled the night before.
- Joshua noted that a second company would help to transport riders with wheelchairs. Doretha requested the company's name, but Joshua could not locate it but would provide it at the next meeting.
- Duretha wanted to know if you can still purchase mobility tickets through the mail. Joshua advised he would have to find out and get back to the RAC.
- Astamay asked why the meeting was being held on Tuesday instead of a usual Thursday. Joshua advised that he was unaware that Thursday was the regular meeting day and will schedule a future meeting on Thursday when possible.

4. Adjournment

Future Meeting Dates:

Next Commission Meeting –

Tuesday, June 10th, 2022, 1:00PM (meetings.transitRTA.com/CMTMC)

Next RAC Meeting –

(meetings.transitRTA.com/RAC)

Frequently used acronyms

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| RTA | Regional Transportation Agency |
| RAC | Riders Advisory Council |
| TDP | Transit Development Plan |