

Summary Minutes MARC Advisory Council Meeting
Thursday January 21, 2010, 4:30 P.M.
Acela First Class Lounge - Union Station
50 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20002-4214

Attendees:

MARC Advisory Council:

Andrea Richardson, Brunswick – Excused
Carol Oberdorfer, Brunswick – Present
Chikwe Njoku, Penn & Camden – Present
Christopher Field, Penn – Present
David Frederick, Brunswick – Present
Hameed Ahmed, Camden – Absent
Juan Calvo, Penn – Absent
Laurence Gross, Brunswick – Present
Lynda Clarke, Penn – Excused
Makeda Scott – Penn – Absent
Mark Dysart, Brunswick – Absent
Rafael Guroian, Penn & Camden – Present
Scott Minos, Brunswick – Absent
Steve Chan, Penn – Present

Staff:

Jim Knighton - MTA Director of External Affairs
Ira Silverman – MTA Director of Operations Initiatives
Donna Walsh – Customer Service Superintendent

Guests:

Craig Wietscher – CSX Transportation – Trainmaster for CSX Commuter Operations – Guest Speaker
Debbie Benham – Amtrak - District Manager of Stations
Doug Adams – Amtrak – Superintendent of Terminal and Commuter Operations
Al Scala – Amtrak – Assistant Superintendent of Washington Commuter Services
Larry Stamps – Amtrak – Business Analyst
Jeff Crooks
Miraim Schoenbaum
2 additional guests - unidentified

Call to Order:

- The meeting was called to order at 4:30 PM by Chairman Rafi Guroian.

Schedule Changes

- Some complaints have been received about the short notice given before the recent schedule changes were implemented.

CSX – Guest Speaker Trainmaster Craig Wietscher, who is also a qualified engineer, answered a number of questions about the CSX train switches.

- The switch maintainers were currently based in Baltimore.
- There are discussions about locating switch maintainers at Kensington, to help place them closer to switches that that need more frequent maintenance.
- It was noted that Ivy City is a maintenance site for Amtrak.
- Craig Wietscher noted that response time has improved since dispatching was relocated to Halethorpe, Baltimore County. Craig offered to give tours of the Halethorpe facility for those who are interested.

- To report CSX-related issues/problems, please send an email to marccouncil@mtamaryland.com or Donna Walsh, Customer Service Superintendent, at dwalsh@mtamaryland.com

New Diesel Locomotives

- Al Scala of AMTRAK gave us an update on the deployment of the new diesel MP-36 locomotives, which produce 3600 horsepower, compared to the older GP-39 locomotives, which produce 3000 horsepower.
- These older locomotives can only produce enough electricity for about 6-7 bi-level rail cars.
- These older locomotives will be turned in to be re-manufactured as the new ones come online.
- Currently two of the new diesel locomotives have been deployed, and are pictured on the front of the current MARC train schedule.
- The paperwork to allow these new locomotives to run at 100 MPH is in progress. These locomotives are limited to 90 MPH until the paperwork has been completed, and cannot be used on the Penn line due to this speed limitation.
- There are currently twenty-four more of these new diesel locomotives in Boise, Idaho, waiting to be delivered. For reference, the HHP-8 electric locomotives that are used on the Penn line produce 8000 horsepower. The AEM-7 electric locomotives are 7,000 horsepower.

Construction Projects

Halethorpe Station - Penn Line

- Access road constructed.
- Power lines will be moved in February.
- The bathroom, which has been out of service for about a year, will be investigated by Harry Anderson on Monday January 25th.

BWI Station - Penn Line

- Current construction work should be completed by late spring 2010.
- Amtrak has awarded a contract to rebuild the elevators at the BWI station. Part of this work will include putting in a second elevator on both the northbound and southbound side of the station. This work should be completed by the end of 2011.

Penn Station – Baltimore

- It was announced that the new schedule board will be replaced during the weekend of January 23-24, 2010.

Camden Line

- An update on the status of the LED (Light Emitting Diode) signs will be provided next month.

New Wedge Yard

- Located at Ivy City, and is adjacent to the Northeast Corridor and the Camden Line Union Station Track. This is next to the Acela maintenance facility, near the 1200 block of New York Avenue, NE.
- Near 100% completion on the design phase
- Project will be put out for bid in the late winter to spring timeframe
- Work will start in 2010
- Wedge Yard will be used for train storage

Martins Facility

- Near the Martin State Airport rail station – near Eastern Avenue and White Marsh Boulevard.
- Maintenance facility that is currently being used to reupholster the seats on rail passenger cars.
- Will be expanded to allow for overnight storage of trains.

Legislative Update

- Jim Knighton gave an update on the Maryland State Legislature, which started on Wednesday January 13th, and will end on Monday April 12th, 2010.
- Delegate Saqib Ali of District 39, Montgomery County <http://www.msa.md.gov/msa/mdmanual/06hse/html/msa14612.html> has introduced a bill to prohibit sending texting messages by subway and light rail employees while on the job.

New Members for MARC Riders Advisory Council

- Rafi Gurioan and Steve Chan will review the list of potential new members.

Meeting Site

- Will be in the AMTRAK Acela First Class Lounge for the rest of 2010.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:48 PM Thursday January 21, 2010.