

Summary Minutes MARC Advisory Council Meeting
Thursday June 18, 2009, 4:30 p.m.
Hall of the States, Room 238
444 North Capitol Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20001-1512

Attendees:

MARC Advisory Council:

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

Staff:

Present John Hovatter – MTA Director of MARC Train & Commuter Bus Services
Present - Jim Knighton - MTA Director of External Affairs

Guests:

Larry Stamps – Brunswick Line – AMTRAK employee

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 4:36 PM by Chairman Rafi Guroian

House Bill 492 – Jim Knighton discussed HB 492, which was submitted during the 2009 legislative session by Delegate Al Carr <http://mlis.state.md.us/2009rs/bills/hb/hb0492f.pdf> . HB 492 proposed that a commission be formed to find better ways to fund mass transit. This commission would look into what other cities and counties are doing for funding, and to examine studies done by other cities, counties, and states.

Annual MRAC Event: It was proposed that an annual event to raise awareness of the MARC Riders Advisory Council be held – possibly at the B&O Railroad Museum. Another suggestion was to partner with the National Park Service to hold a rail trip to Harpers Ferry, West Virginia, or use the Old Main Line.

Business Cards for Active Council Members: It was suggested that generic business cards be created. It was noted that the email address marccouncil@mtamaryland.com can be used to receive emails.

Regular Council Reports to the MTA: It was proposed that MRAC issue a report twice a year, and publish these reports on our website.

MARC Status Report: John Hovatter gave an update on the MARC train system.

- Proposed schedule changes for the Penn line will come out in late October.
- Minor schedule changes are scheduled to start around July 13th.

- Single Level rail cars are being refurbished in New York. Brighter lights will be installed, and the HVAC systems will be serviced.
- Thirteen new two level rail cars will be acquired from VRE in the next month. These rail cars are approved to run at speeds up to 125 MPH.
- The renovation work at the BWI rail station on the Penn line should be done in the next month.
- The renovation work at the Halethorpe station on the Penn line is waiting for Amtrak to the power line supports this fall. It is anticipated that the notice to proceed will be given in late 2009, with the work to finish in late 2011.
- The status on the new diesel locomotives is that there are three locomotives that are waiting for their paperwork to be completed. Eleven locomotives are finished and are waiting in Boise, Idaho.
- Complaints were received about the frequent break down of the elevators at the BWI station on the Penn line. These elevators are old and worn out. Amtrak needs to replace these elevators.
- A complaint was received about the signage at the West Baltimore station on the Penn line. It was reported that a passenger could not determine which direction the train would go until they walked to the end of the platform. A request was also received to install traffic lights for pedestrians.

New MRAC Council Members: New council members are needed. Each council member is requested to invite or identify at least one potential new council member.

Next Meeting: The next MRAC meeting will be on Thursday July 16, 2009.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 PM Thursday June 18, 2009.