

**SILVER SPRING CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD**  
**Monday, April 8th, 7 p.m.**  
**Silver Spring Civic Center, Veterans Plaza**

**DRAFT MINUTES**

7:08 p.m. – Katherine Lucas McKay – Called to order, welcome, and intros

Attendees: Melanie Fonder Kaye, Michelle Foster, Jeff Le, Ken Lemberg, Kate Sweeney (MCPL), Don Slater, Tina Slater, Jim Williamson, Phil McLaughlin (RideOn), Mike Larkin CM Evan Glass staff member, Sarah Hoffmann, Kieran McCabe (CM Kate Stewart), Nahom Tekle, Tonya Layden, Shawn Morris, Lene Tsegaye, Richard Hoye, Captain Reed , Hugo Cantu Gary Klauber

7:14 p.m. – Public Safety Report – Capt. Reed

- Working to get the word out about the new legislation (to be signed 4/15) - Exp Bill 3-24, Late Night Establishments-Hours of Operation – which aligned the operating hours of late night establishments serving alcohol.
- April 15-through end of April: special events response teams to assist in the evenings with foot patrols and increased efforts in parking garages (references numerous officers hurt Friday night, 4/5/24)

7:20 – Ride On MCT Overview – Phil McLaughlin

- Focus on bringing back a strong customer service lens
- Beginning safety messaging campaign in the next few months
- Ride on Reimagined study concludes next month (May)
- Ride On turns 50 in 2025 (stay tuned!)
- Ridership has not come back the same way it was pre-pandemic: Last year – 14 million, this year – around 18 million; pre-pandemic – 20 million
- Ride on study began in Spring 2022, close to completion, recs will have a 10-year horizon
- Growth in flex pilot – (like Uber/Lyft) – average wait time for Ride on Flex is 7-10 mins
- This fall, launching second and third Ride On extRa lines – pink route, lime route
- Climate - East Coast industry leader, Zero Emission Climate Goals – reduce 80 percent by 2027, 100 percent by 2035
- Marketing campaigns
  - “What Drives You” campaign (talk directly to customers)
  - Ride On anniversary
  - Great Seneca Transit Network campaign
  - Ride On Reminders

## Q&A

- Tina Slater: How did you market the What Drives You survey?
- Ken Lemberg: How do you interact with Metrobus?
- Michelle Foster: What's the strategy for attracting younger riders?
  - Kids Ride Free went up 40 percent the year after it started
  - KidsRideFree Summer 2019 - Feb 2020 – all ridership inc by two percent
- Jeff Le: Alluded to a decline in customer service – what factors led to that?
  - Made customer service our highest priority – on time performance, number of missed trips (significantly missed – figured that out by half), number of complaints per 100,000 riders – Last year 26 per 100K, now 18 per 100K – ridership continuing to grow – we have a long way to go
  - Seven different languages
  - Recruitment and retention is a problem: We are struggling just like every public transit agency in this country. Recruitment class of 30, only 18 showed up, of those 18 we will only yield six to be bus operators, increased starting salary, plus other benefits.
- Katherine Lucas McKay: Are WMATA money woes affecting planning?
  - Nothing in this fiscal year – will have to cross this bridge in the next fiscal year  
Accessibility – I want benches in shade more than anything else except a bus that shows up on time – where is that happening? – 5400 bus stops in MC, about 800 are shaded, about 400 have some sort of seating, it's a pretty small percentage with about a million dollars per year
- Sarah Hoffmann – ADA less than 40 years ago, next year is 50 years. What else are we doing?
  - In 2004, there was a dedication to making all bus stops ADA compliant. We've improved ADA compliance on about 3700 out of 5400. That program is still ongoing, there's some we're not going to make ADA compliant (rural) (Tell ADA story for the 50th)
- Mike Larkin – frequency of service, what is MCDOT thinking about to improve frequency? Is there a direct budgetary ask to improve this?
  - There's definitely a budgetary cost. Three different categories – we have a lot to ask in terms of operators, buses, etc.

- Question from the chat: How long does it take from submitting a job application to onboarding? CAN COME BACK WITH THIS ANSWER.
- Tonya: What is working in terms of stopping incidents on buses?
  - Administrators ride the bus so we can see and observe firsthand from a customer perspective the experience.
- Tina Slater: How much does the cost of housing affect the recruitment issue – is that related to bus drivers?
  - Suspects that it's related. Lots of employees live in other places, including Hagerstown, Upper Marlboro.
- Question from the phone - Richard Hoyer – What can other agencies/others be doing to assist? Ambassador type program? Many firefighters are school bus drivers on their days off – have a program – have public safety employees take on part time work – bus racks on the buses but it's not a thing it's a program – have to review the bike racks for do they meet the market needs of today and what are the needs in an evolving bicycle market?
- Question from the phone: How best to message the bus safety issue?

8:00 p.m. – Motion to accept March minutes (Tonya), seconded (Michelle), and unanimous vote to accept

8:01 p.m. – Committee Reports

- TREE – no April TREE meeting
- Neighborhoods – April meeting is on affordable housing, consider shift from Passover
- NOTE: No May committee meetings (falls on Memorial Day)

Other Updates

- CM Stewart staff
  - Noted budget season, bills including late night bill, faith/housing measure, bill 7-24 to provide tenant protections has public hearing 4/23
- CM Glass staff
  - Montgomery Connects – program to give out free laptops: [MD.gov/computer](http://MD.gov/computer); Leaf blower incentive program in effect July 1, 2024
- Hugo Cantu, CM Jawando's staff
  - Public hearing today and a few in the next few days, extremely focused on MCPS, MCollege, out of school time programming

8:17 p.m. – Steve (Stephen Aldrich) - Planning Board

Master Plan of Highways & Transitways (see PPT Nahom shared)  
[Stephen.Aldrich@MontgomeryPlanning.org](mailto:Stephen.Aldrich@MontgomeryPlanning.org)

#### Q&A

- Vanessa P – Long BRanch classification?

#### 8:57 p.m. – Katherine on Comment Letters

- Budget letter – submit a comment letter to CE and relevant agencies, Council, would vote on contents in May meeting (MFK move, Michelle second, Unanimous)
- Development/housing letter – Ellsworth development, Tastee diner location near the courthouse – being redeveloped but there will be housing above it (MFK move, Michelle second w contingent additional info on the Tastee diner spot, Unanimous)
- Growth and infrastructure plan – deadline is not as imminent. (Don move, Taneshia second, unanimous)

9:04 p.m. – Meeting adjourned.