

Riders' Advisory Council

March 4, 2026

Members Present:

Cole Staudt, Chair, District of Columbia
Matthew Clark, Maryland
Lucas Habosky, At-Large/District of Columbia
Alex Mendelsohn, At-Large/Virginia
Brian Meyer, Virginia
Patrick Sheehan, At-Large/AAC Representative
Thomas Shepard, At-Large/District of Columbia
Irene Stephens, District of Columbia
Hendeke Tafesse, Virginia
Brandon Wu, District of Columbia

Metro Staff Present:

John Pasek , Deputy Board Secretary
José Reyes, Board Program Manager

Call to Order:

Mr. Staudt called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Approval of Agenda:

The agenda was approved without objection.

Public Comment:

There were no comments from members of the public.

Annual Report

Mr. Staudt noted that the data collection phase of compiling the report has concluded and the group will now move to analyzing the data collection. He turned the floor over to Mr. Shepard for an update.

Mr. Shepard said that he has created a document to categorize and tabulate rider concerns. He noted that frequency and reliability have emerged as riders' biggest concerns, along with concerns about National Guard presence in the Metro system, and safety and cleanliness. He said that there are approximately 300 responses to the survey and he's currently reviewed about 100 of them. He asked for volunteers to assist in reviewing the remaining responses

and noted that he still needs to review and tabulate the responses regarding potential improvements.

Mr. Staudt asked for members who would be able to help review responses and assist in drafting portions of the report. He said that the goal is to spend the next two weeks reviewing and categorizing the data, then spend the following two weeks assembling a draft in order to give members sufficient time to review in advance of the April meeting. He explained that the report would then be presented to the Metro Board at its April meeting.

New Business:

Mr. Staudt then asked members if they had any new business, potential topics for upcoming meetings, etc. He added that he heard from a rider who was happy that the escalator replacement at Navy Yard wrapped up early.

Mr. Wu said he has heard from riders regarding service issues on the morning commute and station overruns for trains operating in automatic mode, and he asked whether the Washington Metrorail Safety Commission (WMSC) had any issues or standards. Mr. Pasek gave an overview of the WMSC and its role in safety oversight at Metro. Mr. Staudt suggested getting an update on Metro's performance for trains operating in automatic mode.

Mr. Mendelsohn said that it would be useful to have someone who is responsible for integrating real-time service information into Metro's data sets come talk with the RAC, as he has heard from fellow riders about issues around information when there are service disruptions.

Mr. Staudt then turned the floor over to Mr. Simone, a member of the public. Mr. Simone noted that Metro often alerts riders to bus delays due to "operator availability," but for routes that run with only one bus, such as the C83, lack of an operator means that there are no buses running. He said that he wasn't sure if there were other similar routes.

Mr. Simone also asked about member recruitment, since the RAC appoints members in March and he hadn't heard anything about recruitment. Mr. Pasek explained that member terms expire in December, and that last year's recruitment in March was due to the Board increasing the size of the RAC, from eleven to fifteen members, at the end of January. He said that during February and March of last year, recruitment was underway for those new seats on the Council, but that was a one-time occurrence.

Mr. Simone also asked about the date of the April meeting. Mr. Pasek said that the meeting would be in-person at Metro Headquarters on April 1st.

Ms. Stephens asked how the results of the RAC's survey were shared and disseminated. Mr. Staudt said that the survey responses feed into the group's annual report. Ms. Stephens clarified that she wanted to know how the report was shared with and promoted to the public. Mr. Staudt said that, since the report is aimed at the Board, that hasn't been done in the past, but that would be something to consider in the coming month. Mr. Wu said that sharing the final report with individuals who completed the survey would be a good way to connect with riders. He added that he sent the questionnaire to Greater Greater Washington, a local urbanist blog, and they reached out to him to see if the RAC would be interested in submitting an op-ed about the report. There was further discussion about the RAC submitting an article to the blog and how to best coordinate that with the presentation of the report to the Board.

Mr. Reyes told members that Metrorail's 50th anniversary is on March 27th and told them to stay tuned for details about anniversary events.

Mr. Staudt reminded members that the April meeting would be in-person and that it would include annual RAC leadership elections.

Adjournment:

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.