Bonnie,

Here is a link to metro's response. The safety of our staff is of great importance to us.

https://www.cityofmadison.com/news/2025-04-02/metro-statement-on-recent-driver-assault

Tom

From: Bonnie Roe <bonnie.roe@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 2, 2025 11:12 AM
To: Mayor <Mayor@cityofmadison.com>; Lynch, Thomas <TLynch@cityofmadison.com>; Stuehrenberg, Justin <JStuehrenberg@cityofmadison.com>; Kamoske, Angela <AKamoske@cityofmadison.com>; Transportation Commission <TransportationCommis@cityofmadison.com>; All Alders <allalders@cityofmadison.com>
Subject: Re: Metro Bus Drivers are being Assaulted

Caution: This email was sent from an external source. Avoid unknown links and attachments.

FYI, MPD put out an Incident Report this morning which takes care of my question on that end. Haven't heard any other response so far.

https://www.cityofmadison.com/police/newsroom/incidentreports/incident.cfm?id=32368

On Tue, Apr 1, 2025, 4:29 PM Bonnie Roe <bonnie.roe@gmail.com> wrote:

> All,
>
> I am writing out of a sense of alarm that bus driver assaults seem to be occurring with increasing frequency. There have been 4 attacks in 5 weeks that I am aware of, yet I've seen not a word from Metro Transit Leadership or any City Leadership. I find this unacceptable.
>
> The assault which occurred on the A Line on E. Wash near 4th Street last Sunday evening at about 7:55pm really caught my attention, as the driver and passengers were trapped in a bus with malfunctioning doors that would not open.

The frantic driver had no protection and no one had a way out. These doors have been problematic since these 60-foot electric buses arrived. This is not the first time an emergency occurred and passengers (and the driver) were stuck inside, needing rescue. That incident was kept under wraps as well. What will it take for this to change?

Metro Transit's policy of having drivers call Metro Transit Dispatch instead of 911 needs to change. There needs to be driver discretion because sometimes help needs to come immediately. Instead Metro Transit Dispatch seems to have given inaccurate or insufficient information to the 911 call center. 911 Dispatch and the responding medics did not even know the suspect was still on the bus when they arrived. But that had been clearly communicated to Metro Dispatch by the driver, including a physical description he had to audibly give THREE TIMES WHILE THE PERPETRATOR WAS STILL ON THE BUS. STUCK inside the bus.

Metro dispatch told the driver that calls to both 911 numbers were busy. How unsettling would that be?

Police were dispatched many minutes after EMS, who had to stage blocks away. The understaffed police department was already on priority calls when this call came in. It did not make it into an Incident Report and was not included in MPD's Notable Calls blog. Therefore, of course, not in the news. This could have been a whole lot worse, had the suspect not stopped assaulting the bus driver, or had he begun fighting with others on the bus. They were stuck in that bus for at least 20-25 minutes after the assault.

According to some, the suspect could be seen and heard assaulting the driver on video, with more than 10 punches to his head. Yet word is the suspect was released after being detained for a short time. If this is true, I would like to know why. There should be a thorough investigation into the entire response to this incident. I would like to see the results.

There have been many problems with the doors on these new 60-foot electric buses since they arrived and went into service on Sept. 22. As you know. My opinion is these buses should not be driven until this problem is resolved.

I am asking for the following:

☐ the Mayor or Metro Transit GM should make a statement to the community and to Metro drivers that assaults of bus drivers is unacceptable and will not be tolerated
☐ cease using these electric buses until the door issue is resolved and/or every driver is taught emergency protocols for opening a stuck door some other way
☐ find a way to protect drivers from assaults or allow them the means to protect themselves
☐ change your policy to give drivers discretion on when to call 911 for themselves
☐ make sure Metro Transit dispatchers have clear guidelines for how to contact and communicate with the 911 call center
☐ investigate every detail of this response, see what you can learn, and put it into practice as quickly as possible

Many of your drivers are afraid on the job. They also are told not to talk with the media. Safety issues concerning Metro Transit are being hidden from Madison residents and we demand transparency and accountability for these problems. We demand better treatment and support for our bus drivers. Ridership should not be expected to increase while these conditions remain unresolved. Morale cannot be expected to improve until drivers feel like you have their backs.

Please address these issues in a transparent way and inform the community of your progress.

The relevant call log can be heard at the link below, starting at 7:55:33 and continuing until about 8:25pm on March 30, 2025.

https://openmhz.com/system/madisonwi?time=1743382800000

A response to my concerns is requested.

Thank you,

Bonnie Roe
District 11