



**TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES
March 24, 2016**

PRESENT: Councillor Tim Outhit, Chair
Councillor Reg Rankin, Vice Chair
Councillor Wayne Mason
Councillor Russell Walker
Councillor Gloria McCluskey
Councillor Linda Mosher

STAFF: Ms. Jane Fraser, Acting Deputy Chief Administrative Officer
Ms. Kirby Grant, Solicitor
Ms. Cathy Collett, Legislative Assistant

The following does not represent a verbatim record of the proceedings of this meeting.

The agenda, supporting documents, and information items circulated to the Transportation Standing Committee are available online: <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/SCtransp/160324tsc-agenda.php>

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m. and adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 21, 2016

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Rankin

THAT the minutes of January 21, 2016 be approved as presented.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED

3. APPROVAL OF THE ORDER OF BUSINESS AND APPROVAL OF ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS

Additions: 15.1 Amendments to Administrative Order 39 – Taxi and Limousine Regulations – Councillor Walker

Deletions: 10.3.2 Presentation by Emily Duffett re: item 12.1.1 Use of Accessible Taxi Service to Supplement Access-A-Bus

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Rankin

THAT the agenda be approved as amended.

Two-third majority vote required.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES – NONE

5. CALL FOR DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTERESTS – NONE

6. MOTIONS OF RECONSIDERATION – NONE

7. MOTIONS OF RESCISSION – NONE

8. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – NONE

9. NOTICES OF TABLED MATTERS – NONE

10. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

10.1 Correspondence

10.1.1 The Legislative Assistant noted that correspondence had been received for item 12.1.2 and 12.1.3 and that this correspondence was circulated to Standing Committee members. For a detailed list of correspondence received, please refer to the specific agenda item.

10.2 Petitions - None

10.3 Presentations

10.3.1 Presentation from Mr. Gerry Post re: item 12.1.1 Use of Accessible Taxi Service to Supplement Access-A-Bus.

Mr. Post thanked the Standing Committee for the opportunity to speak. He commented that he is encouraged by the Staff Report regarding the Use of Accessible Taxi Service to Supplement Access-A-Bus, but that he has a few observations to add to the discussion. The first is that it is important to the move to develop partnership that all new taxi licenses are accessible. He explained that 20% of the population in Halifax have some form of a disability and that this places tremendous demand on the current transit system. Mr. Post commented that HRM must find ways to be more efficient and to reduce the cost for accessible transportation. He continued to explain that many people do not realize how convenient the conventional transit system is and that it could foster awareness of this if there was a free introductory pass for people with disabilities to try the conventional system. Mr. Post concluded that he is somewhat disappointed that the route taken is an expression of interest as opposed to Staff entering into a dialogue with the community to develop a business model that makes sense. Mr. Post noted that he would like to compliment the tremendous job that transit drivers and transit staff are doing.

The Chair thanked Mr. Post for his presentation.

10.3.2 Presentation from Ms. Emily Duffett re: item 12.1.1 Use of Accessible Taxi Service to Supplement Access-A-Bus.

This item was deleted during the Approval of the Order of Business as Ms. Duffett was unable to attend.

11. INFORMATION ITEMS BROUGHT FORWARD – NONE

12. REPORTS

12.1 STAFF

12.1.1 Use of Accessible Taxi Service to Supplement Access-A-Bus

The following was before the Transportation Standing Committee:

- *A staff recommendation report dated February 25, 2016*
- *A staff presentation regarding Use of Accessible Transportation to Supplement Access-A-Bus*

Mr. Glenn Bannon, Manager of Transit Operations, and Mr. Ahmad Kidwai gave a brief presentation outlining the increased demand for accessible transportation and the need for a more innovative approach.

MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Mosher

THAT the Transportation Standing Committee direct Halifax Transit staff to develop an Expression of Interest to explore the viability of a partnership with HRM Accessible Transportation service providers to support Halifax Transit Access-A-Bus service.

The Standing Committee discussed the value of reaching out to the taxi committee in order to better inform the expression of interest as well as the importance of understanding the needs of the citizens who may rely on this service.

Councillor McCluskey entered the meeting at 1:24 p.m.

Councillor Outhit noted that the recommendation should be amended to “recommend that Regional Council direct” staff, as the Transportation Standing Committee cannot direct staff on this matter. Councillor Rankin accepted the amendment as friendly.

As such, the motion now reads:

THAT the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council direct Halifax Transit staff to develop an Expression of Interest to explore the viability of a partnership with HRM Accessible Transportation service providers to support Halifax Transit Access-A-Bus service.

AMENDED MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

12.1.2 Installation of Side Guards on HRM Vehicles

The following was before the Transportation Standing Committee:

- *A staff recommendation report dated January 13, 2016*
- *Correspondence from Mr. Jeff White*
- *Correspondence from Ms. Sara Lipson*
- *Correspondence from Mr. Stephen Roth*
- *Correspondence from Mr. Hudson Shotwell*
- *Correspondence from Mr. Kirk Mock*
- *Correspondence from Ms. Janet Sutherland*
- *Correspondence from Ms. Jackie Dean*
- *Correspondence from Ms. Sara Kirk*
- *Correspondence from Mr. John Sparling*

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor McCluskey

THAT the Transportation Standing Committee take no further action respecting the implementation of side guards on HRM owned and contractor vehicles.

Councillor Mason indicated that he did not believe the report answered the questions initially posed by the request for a staff report, specifically, whether or not HRM has the legal authority to mandate sideguards on municipally contracted trucks. Councillor Mason requested that the Standing Committee vote against the staff recommendation.

MOTION PUT AND DEFEATED.

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor McCluskey

THAT the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report

a) assuming all new heavy trucks shall be equipped with sideguards, outline the annual additional cost required to ensure all trucks are equipped with sideguards by 2022, starting in fiscal 2017/18.

b) Outline the cost and legal authority of requiring long-term contractors (such as garbage collection and snow removal) to install side guards on all heavy vehicles.

c) The cost and legal authority of requiring all city-contracted (including hourly/daily jobs) vehicles to be equipped with side guards.

And this report shall be returned to the committee at its next scheduled meeting with new alternatives that include this information.

Councillor Mason commented that the implementation of sideguards should be phased in over time and included in the next budget.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

12.1.3 Halifax Transit Moving Forward Together Plan

The following was before the Transportation Standing Committee:

- *A staff recommendation report dated March 9, 2016*
- *A staff presentation regarding the Halifax Transit Moving Forward Together Plan*
- *Correspondence from Mr. Ryan Brownell*
- *Correspondence from Ms. Beverley Clarkson*
- *Correspondence from Mr. Patrick Kelly*
- *Correspondence from Ms. Joan Alexander*
- *Correspondence from Mr. Nathan Brett*

The Standing Committee discussed referring this item to Regional Council, commenting that it should be dealt with during the Committee of the Whole. The Standing Committee discussed whether or not to hear the staff presentation during the Transportation Standing Committee and decided that because residents were attendance with the understanding that this item would be addressed, they would hear the presentation.

Mr. Dave Reage and Ms. Patricia Hughes provided a presentation regarding the Moving Forward Together Plan. Ms. Hughes explained that a table was omitted with the effect that it looked as though the evening ferry service to the Alderney ferry terminal was being cancelled. Ms. Hughes presented the correct table and explained that the Alderney Ferry's evening service will be status quo.

MOVED by Councillor Rankin, seconded by Councillor Mason

That the Moving Forward Together Plan be referred to Regional Council and addressed during Committee of the Whole.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

12.1.4 2015/16 Q3 Halifax Transit KPI Report

The following was before the Transportation Standing Committee:

- *A staff information report dated March 8, 2016*
- *A staff presentation regarding the 2015/16 Q3 Halifax Transit KPI Report*

Mr. Dave Reage gave a brief presentation regarding the 2015/16 Q3 Halifax Transit KPI Report.

Responding to questions of clarification from Committee members, Mr. Reage explained:

- Ridership is not down 310,000, as the media suggested. A more reasonable figure would be that ridership is down by 30,000, but this is only a best guess as ridership figures cannot be completely accurate until the farebox technology is in place. \$30,000 is within the margin of error.
- It is reasonable to believe that the drop in ridership is connected to the construction on the MacDonald Bridge
- There are still concerns with the high number of no-shows and last-minute cancellations for Access A Bus services

12.2 HARBOUR EAST AND MARINE DRIVE COMMUNITY COUNCIL - NONE

12.3 ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

12.3.1 Committee Update

The Standing Committee received the update

12.4 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

12.4.1 Committee Update

The Standing Committee received the update

12.5 CROSSWALK SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

12.5.1 Committee Update

The Standing Committee received the update

13. MOTIONS

13.1 Councillor Mason – Traffic Control Persons for Special Events

MOVED by Councillor Mason, seconded by Councillor Rankin

THAT the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report to outline the implications of a request to Regional Council for the Mayor to write to the province requesting an addition to the Motor Vehicle Act that would allow ‘Traffic Control Persons’ to direct the movement of traffic for special events sanctioned by the municipality.

The Committee indicated that the report should include the potential implications for the rest of Nova Scotia as well as the legal implications.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

14. IN CAMERA (IN PRIVATE) - NONE

15. ADDED ITEMS

15.1 Amendments to Administrative Order 39 – Taxi and Limousine Regulations – Councillor Walker

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Rankin.

THAT That the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report to consider changes to Administrative Order 39 Taxi and Limousine Regulations for the inclusion of electric cars.

Councillor Walker indicated that the staff report should also consider whether amendments to by-law T-1000 would also be required in order to permit the licensing of electric cars as taxis or limousines. He suggested that staff pay particular attention to Schedule five (5), sections one (1) and four (4) of Administrative Order 39 in developing their recommendation.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

16. NOTICES OF MOTION – NONE

17. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Pat Gates commented that, as a person with cross disabilities who uses the Access A Bus system, she understands that the requirement to book an Access A Bus seven days in advance is not always

feasible and does not allow for spontaneity. Ms. Gates commented that cancellations may happen frequently if people feel unwell and decide not to continue with their plans – twelve hours of advance notice is not always possible. She explained that the only time she was a “no-show” occurred because she was seconds later than her arranged pick-up time and the bus left without her. Ms. Gates addressed the difficulty and expense of getting an Accessible Taxi and described how it can frequently be impossible for someone with a disability to travel throughout the city. She noted that accessibility legislation will be coming to the Province in the Fall and that the key word is inclusion. She commented that HRM is thirty years behind in terms of accessibility, though she does understand that attempts are being made to address this.

Ms. Danyele Belliveau of the Purcell’s Cove Neighbourhood Committee referred to a number of power point slides and explained that, under the Moving Forward Together Plan, the bus that services Purcell’s Cove will only run on peak weekday hours. She commented that Transit staff did listen, somewhat, to the petitions and submissions of the community, but that the lack of flexibility in the proposed plan will make transit useless for many. Ms. Belliveau commented that cutting the route does not make any economic sense and that it provides access to a wide range of people, including students and seniors who rely exclusively on the bus and do not only require transit at peak hours. She explained that the route also provides public access to the Purcell’s Cove area and is especially busy when used by visitors in the summer. The #15 provides access to hiking locations, Fort York Redoubt, the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron, and key “urban nature” locations. She concluded that the bus route pays for itself and requested that the bus service to Purcell’s Cove not be reduced.

Mr. Nathan Brett of Purcell’s Cove commented that he appreciates that Transit recognized the Purcell’s Cove community’s efforts and proposes to maintain some bus service to the area, but that the proposed service is not enough. Mr. Brett outlined the details of the route and the financial implications of the reduction in service, commenting that there is no talk of reducing the local transportation tax in the area, and thus the community would essentially be subsidizing other routes.

Mr. Shawn Gillis of the public advocacy group, “It’s More Than Busses,” indicated that he represents a collation of groups from across the municipality. He commented that these groups hope to see a transfer network that brings transportation all over HRM, not just to the downtown and universities. He explained that the proposed plan helps this by providing more frequency on key routes and that it is a good move to locate the critical locations for transit as well as to increase the span of service on weekends and weekday evenings, which is great for people who work shifts. He commented that it is great that there was a lot of feedback from the public and he congratulates transit for taking this seriously. Mr. Gillis explained that the plan provides no information about transit times, how far people can get, and what routes they can use to get to Burnside and the Irving Shipyard. He suggested that the Committee of the Whole direct staff to bring more information in an easier digestible way. He concluded that there are good things in the plan, but that he has concerns about cross-town service and that in the absence of a CAO, a permanent director of Transit, and the information that will be provided by the AVL services, that it would be better to wait 6-8 months before finalizing the plan at a time in which there will be more information to evaluate.

Mr. Jeff Blair commented that, as an individual and a graduate student at DAL in Environmental Studies, he would like to echo some of the points already mentioned and to acknowledge the work of transit to get the plan on paper and out to the public. He commented that it is exciting to hear transit as part of the public discourse and that a number of items in the plan stood out. He noted that corridor routes still have a 30 minute frequency, which adds a long time to travel times and that the plan does a good job of eliminating the twisty routes. He concluded that there is no need to rush the launch date and that it is more important to get it right.

Mr. Ben Wedge of the Halifax Cycling Coalition thanked the Committee for rejecting the staff recommendation on sideguards.

Mr. Shalom Mandeville explained that he owned a car until 1998, at which point he got rid of it because he was not able to discipline himself to not use it and he is a very active environmentalist. He commented

that Canada signed a document that says they will reduce the greenhouse gases and that the goals cannot be achieved unless there is alternate found for the use of cars. He commented on the harmful effects on the environment caused by automobiles and emphasized the importance of public transit being a viable method of transportation.

18. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – April 28, 2016.

19. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:26 p.m.

Cathy Collett
Legislative Assistant