

TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

November 13, 2013

REVISED

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Councillor Reg Rankin, Chair
Councillor Tim Outhit
Councillor Jennifer Watts
Councillor Barry Dalrymple
Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor Waye Mason
Councillor Russell Walker

REGRETS:

Councillor Darren Fisher

STAFF:

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Legislative Assistant called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

1.1 Election of Chair and Vice Chair

The Legislative Assistant called for nominations for the position of Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Watts, that Deputy Mayor Rankin be elected as Chair of the Transportation Standing Committee for 2013. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Legislative Assistant called three times for any further nominations; there being none, she declared Deputy Mayor Walker as Chair of the Transportation Standing Committee.

Deputy Mayor Rankin assumed the Chair and called for nominations for Vice Chair.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Dalrymple, that Councillor Outhit be elected as Vice Chair of the Transportation Standing Committee for 2013. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

The Chair called three times for any further nominations; there being none, she declared Councillor Outhit as Vice Chair of the Transportation Standing Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – October 2, 2013

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the Transportation Standing Committee minutes of October 2, 2013 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

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

Councillor Hendsbee requested that Information Item 1 “Transit Engagement Models” be added to the next Transportation Standing Committee meeting agenda for discussion.

Councillor Watts requested that the updated Transportation Standing Committee status sheet be emailed to members.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason, that the order of business be approved as presented. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & PRESENTATIONS

4.1 Correspondence - None

4.2 Petitions - None

4.3 Presentations

**4.3.1 Institutional District Transportation Demand Management Committee:
Introduction and Overview**

Ms. Rochelle Owen, Dalhousie University, presented to the Committee on behalf of the Halifax Urban Institutional District Transportation Demand Management Committee. Ms. Owen advised that the Committee was formed in 2010 to share ideas and look at joint Transportation Demand Management Projects. Partners include Dalhousie, Saint Mary's University, Capital Health, IWK, HRM and Nova Scotia Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal.

Mr. Owen reviewed the transportation context as it relates to the Committee and reviewed statistics of the estimated areas of residence for institutional district employment in HRM. She reviewed activities of the Committee from 2010 to present and examples of programs to date. Ms. Owen identified opportunities for TDM initiatives for HRM.

A copy of the presentation is on file and online.

Councillor Dalrymple joined the meeting at 2:23 p.m.

Committee members discussed the presentation with Ms. Owen, and Ms. Owen responded to questions from the Committee at this time, clarifying the following:

- The TDM Committee did participate in the Metro Transit Five Year Plan consultations;
- The Institutional District Model could be instituted elsewhere, with the use of federal and municipal funding to run the programs.
- There are ways to free up streets from parking to create bike lanes, including the construction of parkades offering hourly parking.
- There are models for bike sharing programs that would work for HRM, including a municipally run program, where companies pay the capital for a bike rack and a membership fee for their employees to use the bikes to get around town to meetings and errands.

Councillor Watts requested that the presentation be linked to the Transportation Standing Committee online agenda.

Committee members thanked Ms. Owen for the presentation.

4.3.2 Bicycle Nova Scotia: Paving Highway Shoulders for Active Transportation

No one was present to present. This item was deferred to the next Transportation Standing Committee meeting agenda.

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

5.1 Monthly Update – Commuter Rail Plan

Ms. Patricia Hughes, Supervisor, Service Design & Projects, Metro Transit, provided an update to the Committee, indicating that a letter was sent to CN on October 1st asking for their participation in the commuter rail plan; a response has not yet been received. The litigation involving the railway bridges that was preventing CN from participating with HRM has been completed. Staff are preparing an Request for Proposals (RFP) for the study, to be ready to move forward regardless of CN's response.

Councillor Watts asked that if a response is received from CN, that staff inform the Committee via email instead of waiting for the next meeting. She also asked that a link to the RFP be circulated when it comes available.

Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO, advised that the study involves a large scope with a lot of information, and staff have been asked to work on the various steps and stages concurrently to get the study moving forward.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – None

7. REPORTS

7.1 STAFF

7.1.1 Taxi Medallion Proposal and Taxi Owner Licenses

An information report dated September 9, 2013 was before the Committee. A request was made at the October 2, 2013 meeting to add this report to the November agenda for discussion.

MOVED by Councillor Walker, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council request a staff report on the feasibility of requesting enabling legislation from the province for the transferability of taxi owner licenses, which would allow Council to consider a taxi medallion system.

Councillor Walker clarified that this is a request for a staff report, so that if Council wished to decide to initiate a medallion program at some time in the future, it would have the information.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.1.2 Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group Review

An information report dated September 23, 2013 was before the Committee. A request was made at the October 2, 2013 meeting to add this report to the November agenda for discussion.

Mr. Kevin Hindle, Regional Coordinator, Taxi & Limousine Services, responded to questions from Councillor Walker, clarifying that the annual review of the Taxi & Limousine Liaison Group will involve a review of issues before the Group, which can be reported to the Transportation Standing Committee.

7.1.3 Paving Highway Shoulders for Active Transportation

An information report dated August 29, 2013 was before the Committee. A request was made at the October 2, 2013 meeting to add this report to the November agenda for discussion.

Councillor Hendsbee indicated that since HRM has the legislative authority to pave highway shoulders for active transportation, it should be doing so when the opportunity arises. He noted several Eastern Shore communities where this is currently being done. Councillor Hendsbee noted that the Active Transportation Plan being developed for Porters Lake will recommend this approach.

The Chair commented on the delineation of jurisdiction and responsibility for municipal and provincial roads.

7.1.4 SmartTrip E-Pass Fare Medium and SmartTrip Membership Fee Structure

A recommendation report dated September 25, 2013 was before the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend to Regional Council:

- 1. The approval of the SmartTrip E-Pass as a permanent employer-based annual transit pass fare medium, as described in the Discussion section of the September 25, 2013 report;**
- 2. To authorize the Director of Metro Transit to enter into Agreements, in accordance with Attachment A of the September 25, 2013 report, on behalf of Halifax Regional Municipality with employers who agree to participate in the SmartTrip E-Pass Program and that any changes to the template shall be reviewed by Legal Services and approved by the CAO; and**

3. Allow modification of the SmartTrip membership fee structure to reduce fees following the initial year of membership in accordance with Table 2 of the September 25, 2013 report.

At the request of the Chair, Mr. David McCusker, Regional Transportation Manager, clarified that the cost of the pass would be reduced by 1.5 months by HRM, and HRM would require the employer to also pay for 1.5 months. He noted that the purchaser would therefore be provided with a 12 month transit pass for the cost of 9 months.

Councillor Mason spoke of the importance of HRM participating in its own program as an example, and noted that a motion was approved by the Transportation Standing Committee in July 2013 requesting the implementation of the SmartTrip E-Pass program for HRM employees.

With the agreement of the seconder, Councillor Mason put forward the following amendment:

4. Include during the budget planning process of Regional Council consideration of the costs and benefits of commencing implementation of HRM's Smart Trip E-Pass program for HRM employees in 2014/15 fiscal year.

At the request of Mr. Mike Labrecque, Deputy CAO, Mr. McCusker advised that staff had intended to bring forward the Committee's request to open the program to HRM employees in the upcoming budget process.

Members of the Committee spoke of the benefits and successes of this pilot program.

Councillor Watts inquired as to the status of a report that was requested by the Transportation Standing Committee in August on mechanisms to provide a subsidized Annual Bus Pass to low income residents. Mr. Dave Reage, Manager, Planning and Scheduling, Metro Transit, advised that report is targeted for the December 4th meeting.

At the request of Councillor Hendsbee, Mr. McCusker clarified that the federal tax credit for transit passes would still apply through the Smart-Trip E-pass. Councillor Hendsbee inquired why staff will wait until 2015 to expand the program and increase marketing and outreach efforts. Mr. McCusker indicated that since the program runs for a calendar year (January 1 to December 31), this would allow staff to focus on marketing the program in November and December of next year for the 2015 year. Responding to further questions from the Chair, Mr. McCusker advised that the pass will need to be distinguishable from monthly transit passes to be easy to be accepted and enforced by drivers and will require a photo id, which would be arranged with a local business.

The Chair suggested that when this matter comes forward to Council, that a presentation is provided.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

7.2 ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.2.1 Update from Councillor Watts (verbal)

Councillor Watts provided a brief update on the activities of the Accessibility Advisory Committee, noting that they received a presentation from the Mental Health Mobile Crisis Team, in an effort to broaden their awareness about mental health accessibility issues. The Committee is also continuing to work on a strategic work plan.

7.3 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.3.1 Update from Councillor Watts (verbal)

Councillor Watts indicated that the Committee did not meet last month, but that a sub-committee is working on the active transportation plan review, which will be coming forward in December.

7.4 CROSSWALK SAFETY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

7.4.1 Update from Councillor Dalrymple (verbal)

Councillor Dalrymple provided a brief update on the activities of the Crosswalk Safety Advisory Committee, noting that the Committee has completed their strategic planning work sessions, which will be coming back for review and finalization at the next meeting.

8. MOTIONS

8.1 Councillor Watts

Background information on the motion was before the Committee.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Mason, that the Transportation Standing Committee requests a staff report exploring possible changes to the Motor Vehicle Act regarding the use of Transportation Association of Canada bikeway traffic control guidelines and other resident concerns as outlined in the staff memorandum dated September 19, 2013.

Councillor Watts noted she would like clarification what it would be legal for HRM to use from the TAC bikeway traffic control guidelines, as this would provide more options to staff.

Councillor Mason commented that changes to the Transportation Act have allowed municipalities to request permission from the Minister to undertake pilot projects. This will allow HRM to test out innovative and flexible ways to improve bike transportation.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. ADDED ITEMS - None

10. NOTICES OF MOTION

10.1 Councillor Walker

Councillor Walker gave Notice of Motion that “at the next regular meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee I will be requesting a staff report on reinstating the taxi committee for November 30, 2014.”

10.2 Councillor Mason

Councillor Mason gave notice of motion that “at the next regular meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee, I propose to more the following: that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report on the possible restriction of on street parking on low volume nights to facilitate street cleaning in the downtown (DH1) zone.”

11. IN CAMERA

The Committee rose at 3:20 p.m. and went into a private In Camera session, in accordance with Section 19 of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, for the purpose of dealing with the following:

11.1 Personnel Matter

11.1.1 Citizen Appointments to Boards and Committees

Citizen and Councillor appointments to boards and committees in keeping with the Public Appointment Policy adopted by Regional Council in August 2011, to be found at <http://www.halifax.ca/boardscom/documents/Citizenrecruitmentpolicy.pdf>

The regular meeting resumed at 3:28 p.m.

12. NEXT MEETING – Wednesday, December 4, 2013

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 4, 2013, at 2:00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, 3rd Floor, City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle
Legislative Assistant

INFORMATION ITEMS

1. Transit Engagement Models (*information report dated October 24, 2013*)
2. Accessibility Advisory Committee – Town Hall Meeting Minutes – September 30, 2013