

**NORTH WEST TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

Thursday, September 29, 2005

PRESENT: Mr. Phil Cox, Chair,  
Mr. Alastair Lawrie  
Mr. Ron McKinnon  
Mr. Alain Bourgeois  
Councillor Brad Johns

ABSENT  
WITH REGRETS: Mr. Bill Chaffey, Vice-Chair  
Mr. John Merrick  
Mr. Gunther Seyffarth

STAFF: Mr. Edward Robar, Coordinator, Transit Scheduling  
Ms. Roxane MacInnis, Planner, Regional Plan  
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	Call to Order .....	3
2.	Approval of Order of Business and Additions/Deletions .....	3
3.	Approval of Minutes .....	3
4.	Business Arising Out of the Minutes .....	3
4.1.	Status Sheet Items .....	3
4.1.1	Transit Study Update .....	3
4.1.2	MSVU Shelter .....	3
4.1.3	Pedestrian Push Buttons .....	4
4.1.4	Pedestrians Crossing Intersections (Bedford area near Bedford Place Mall and Sackville area near Highway 101) .....	4
4.1.5	Metro Link - Transfers .....	4
5.	Consideration of Deferred Business - None .....	4
6.	Reports .....	5
6.1	Active Transportation .....	5
7.	New Business/Added Items .....	6
7.1	New Business .....	6
7.2	Added Items .....	8
8.	Next Meeting Date .....	8
9.	Adjournment .....	8

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm in the Media Room, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor City Hall, 1841 Argyle Street, Halifax.

**2. APPROVAL OF ORDER OF BUSINESS AND ADDITIONS/DELETIONS**

**Addition:** November Schedule Changes - Mr. Edward Robar

The Committee approved the agenda as amended.

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - May 18, 2005 and June 15, 2005**

Mr. Lawrie commented on the corrections, as indicated on page 3 of the May 18, 2005 minutes, for the April 20, 2005 minutes. The Legislative Assistant will forward copies of the corrected April 20, 2005 minutes to the Committee via e-mail.

**MOVED BY Councillor Johns, seconded by Mr. Alastair Lawrie that the minutes of May 18, 2005 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**MOVED BY Councillor Johns, seconded by Mr. Ron McKinnon that the minutes of June 15, 2005 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES**

4.1 Status Sheet Item

4.1.1 Transit Study Update

- A Chart Prepared by Mr. Bill Chaffey/Mr. John Merrick on the Statistics for Those Left Standing on the Route 80 Was Circulated at this Time.

The Committee briefly reviewed the information. Further discussion was deferred to the October meeting.

4.1.2 MSVU Shelter

**MOVED BY Councillor Johns that the Northwest Transit Advisory Committee send a letter to all Councillors whose districts are serviced by the Route 80 requesting a contribution of \$150 from their capital district fund for an additional shelter at the**

**MSVU bus stop location.** Without a seconder for the motion, the following discussion ensued:

Mr. Robar commented that the MSVU shelter is on the list but is not a high priority item as issues such as high ridership have to be addressed first. He added the cost for a normal shelter is approximately \$7,000.

Mr. Cox suggested that an estimate for the shelter be obtained before proceeding with the motion. Further discussion was deferred to the October meeting.

**Mr. Robar is to provide a cost estimate for the shelter as well as a list of which districts are directly serviced by the Route 80.**

#### 4.1.3 Pedestrian Push Buttons

The Committee requested staff provide explanation on how the pedestrian push buttons are supposed to work.

#### 4.1.4 Pedestrians Crossing Intersections (Bedford area near Bedford Place Mall and Sackville area near Highway 101)

- An e-mail dated May 18, 2005 from Mr. Geoff Wright was before the Committee.

Mr. Robar responded to Councillor Johns advising that there is not enough money in the Sackville BRT budget to construct a pedway across the highway.

Councillor Johns suggested that a barricade, a Jersey Barrier or barrier similar to the one on Mumford Road, be built to ensure pedestrians walk under the underpass.

Mr. Cox suggested that Mr. Geoff Wright, Metro Transit, inquire into the matter of the right of way with the provincial Department of Transportation in regards to a walkway or crusher dust pathway that would lead to the Old Sackville Road from the underpass.

#### 4.1.5 Metro Link (Transfers/In Bound-Out Bound)

Mr. Robar confirmed that to transfer from the regular Metro Transit service to a Metro Link would cost an additional .50¢. Students with a U-Pass would also pay the .50¢ transfer fee.

Mr. Robar further commented that the problems associated with the signalization and the

Metro Link buses have been remedied and the service is running well. He added that people are already standing on the Metro Link and the parking lot in Portland Hills is at capacity (180 cars). Mr. Robar advised that schedule adherence has been fantastic.

5. **CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS** - None

6. **REPORTS**

6.1 Staff Reports

6.1.1 Active Transportation

Ms. Roxane MacInnis, Planner, gave a PowerPoint presentation and circulated copies of the Active Transportation Newsletter.

Ms. MacInnis advised that *Active Transportation* will include CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles in the route selection guidelines.

Ms. MacInnis/Mr. Robar responded to questions of the Committee as follows:

- For safety reasons the bike racks are only on the front of the buses and cannot be extended due to the turn "swerve".
- HRM traffic services would have information on whether bike lockers are being used at the terminals. The frames for the information panels regarding the lockers should be installed within a month.
- The Old Sackville Road to the Sackville BRT terminal will have *Share the Road* signs where it is curbed as the road is narrow but wide enough for a bicycle and a car.
- Funding for active transportation comes from various business unit budgets such as: bikeways, transportation demand and RPAM's (Real Property and Asset Management) trails. Other trails groups and the province are also contributing.
- Work is underway for plans to have bikeways/walkways leading up to the Portland Hills terminal.

Councillor Johns added that the trails association is working toward a trail system from Millwood to the Fish Hatchery Park in Bedford. Sewer repairs in the Millwood area have cleared the right of ways and an attempt will be made to have pathways incorporated.

- There has been discussion around a transit stop at the airport and with the Regional Plan some transit service to Enfield may assist this initiative. It is

possible that Acadia Lines may consider a stop at the Sackville Terminal and then a quick stop to the airport so people who work at the airport could use transit. Mr. Robar advised that Metro Transit cannot service the airport as the Metro buses are not designed to hold luggage.

Councillor Johns advised that there is more funding coming forward for transit such as a \$24m grant from the government of Canada.

The Committee discussed briefly the issue of the number of parking spaces intended for the Sackville BRT terminal being reduced from 250 to 180 due to a municipal by-law requiring a 50' buffer. Councillor Johns will contact the Sackville planning office regarding the buffer requirements. He will also speak to the other Councillors on the North West Community Council regarding a review of the buffer requirements if necessary.

## **7. NEW BUSINESS / ADDED ITEMS**

### **7.1 New Business**

#### **7.1.1 North West Community Council Request for a Report from North West Transit Advisory Committee and Metro Transit Regarding Transit Service to Lucasville.**

The Committee agreed that the information supplied to the North West Community Council by the Legislative Assistant via e-mail, including excerpts from previous minutes on prior discussions of the Lucasville transit matter, was sufficient and a report was not necessary.

#### **7.1.2 Consideration of Extension of Service - Colgrove Avenue, Springfield Lake**

Councillor Johns advised that this issue is similar to the Lucasville matter in that residents are requesting transit service to their area. He suggested a park and ride at the Weir Field for the Route 83. He further commented that thirty years ago, Springfield Estates had transit service to their area but are now being told they would have to introduce a Community Transit service.

Mr. Robar responded that Mr. Silver would have to approve allocating the resources. The problem for Metro Transit is that they are unable to introduce new services until the current issues have been addressed such as people being left standing at a bus stop

due to the bus being full or people standing on the bus for long distances. He added it would require an additional bus to offer the extended service to the Route 83 and there just is not an additional bus available. Councillor Johns added that even peak service would be good for now. Mr. Robar commented that there are calls everyday requesting service to various areas. For example, Hammonds Plains Road area, the bus is full every day and they are requesting more service there as well.

Councillor Johns commented that there has to be a plan to address areas such as the Lucasville Road/Hammonds Plains Road/Middle and Upper Sackville as there are new subdivisions coming in.

Mr. Lawrie suggested that those areas be placed on the list for a park and ride.

Mr. McKinnon commented that Community Transit was put forward as a temporary measure. He suggested a plan be put forward to introduce Metro Transit service to the Community Transit serviced areas as there is a proven need there.

Mr. Robar added that with increasing gas and insurance prices there will be an increased demand on transit. He added that it will be a long time before the current issues are addressed. He added the influx of gas tax money may assist.

Mr. Robar advised that at the beginning of September, 300 people per day were left behind due to crowded buses and that is Metro Transit's biggest problem at the moment.

Councillor Johns requested staff recognize the request for extended service to the Lucasville Road area and the Springfield Estates area.

Mr. Lawrie commented that one of the consequences of permitting developments in outlying areas is you have a group of people who cannot use the transit system. A park and ride would be the closest they could get to transit service.

Mr. Cox commented that the situation places this Committee in a poor situation as there is nothing the NWTAC can do regarding service to these areas as the resources are just not there. Perhaps these requests could be placed on a five year plan.

Mr. Robar responded to the Committee indicating that the Regional Plan has been slightly misleading in regards to transit service to Enfield as the service that would go there would not run to the downtown core.

Councillor Johns added that there is no five year plan for transit service to the Fall River

area either and there should at least be a bus to the Sobeys.

Councillor Johns encouraged Metro Transit to have an expansion plan even if it is not possible to do right away it would still be helpful to have a plan in place.

Mr. Robar responded to the Committee that the money that is being set aside for the Fast Ferry project could solve most of the current deficiencies with Metro Transit. Mr. Cox requested that Fast Ferry - Pro's/Con's be added to the agenda for discussion at the October meeting.

Mr. Robar will draft a response to Ms. Rose regarding extension of service to Patton Road.

Mr. Lawrie suggested Metro Transit or this Committee devise a form letter to respond to requests for extension of services or new transit services.

Mr. McKinnon commented that perhaps it is time to let the public know that there is no money for additional services.

## 7.2 Added Items

### 7.2.1 November Schedule Changes - Mr. Robar

**Deferred** to the October meeting.

**8. NEXT MEETING DATE** - Wednesday, October 19, 2005

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:19 pm.

Chris Newson  
Legislative Assistant