

NORTH WEST TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, January 18, 2006

PRESENT: Mr. Phil Cox, Chair,
Mr. Bill Chaffey, Vice-Chair
Mr. Alain Bourgeois
Mr. Alastair Lawrie
Mr. Ron McKinnon
Mr. John Merrick
Mr. Gunther Seyffarth

ABSENT
WITH REGRETS: Councillor Brad Johns

STAFF AND
OTHERS: Mr. Don Scribner, Metro Transit
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm in the Fenerty Room, Sackville Library, 636 Sackville Drive.

2. APPROVAL OF ORDER OF BUSINESS AND ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

- Additions:**
- 7.2.1 2006 Meeting Schedule
 - 7.2.2 Lucasville Road Transit Service
 - 7.2.3 Bus Service - Route 87
 - 7.2.4 Cobequid Community Health Centre - Transit Service

The agenda was **approved as amended**.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - November 9, 2005

Deferred as the minutes were not available.

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Status Sheet Item

4.1.1 Transit Study Update

Mr. Chaffey advised that there is no further update as he is waiting for the October and November (ridership) counts from Metro Transit. Mr. Scribner responded that the information should be available very soon. No further action required at this time. Item to remain on the status sheet.

4.1.2 MSVU Shelter

Discussion ensued on this matter with the conclusion being that the area in question is of an unusual size/configuration and will require a shelter designed specifically for that location. Various options were discussed and all parties encouraged to put forward ideas/suggestions.

Mr. Don Scribner, in response to a Committee member, indicated that Metro Transit does have input during new street construction/design and the placement of bus stops/shelters. He explained that landing pads are installed and concrete poured as part of the sidewalk construction at no cost to Metro Transit. Mr. Scribner advised that Metro

Transit could communicate with HRM's Design and Construction Services regarding a design solution for the requested MSVU Shelter. The Committee strongly urged a shelter be in place before the MSVU U-pass comes into effect. Item to remain on the status sheet.

4.1.3 Pedestrian Walkway Sackville Area Near Highway 101

The following comments were raised during the ensuing discussion on the matter:

- The provincial department of Transportation and Public Works would not want to encourage pedestrians to walk along or cross the highway off ramp by placing stairs or a pathway as it is unsafe to cross at this location.
- Mr. Scribner responded to the Committee indicating that another department/government level would have to initiate the process for a ramp/pathway as all Metro Transit can do is ask permission to place a bus stop/landing bay.
- There is increased concern for public safety now that the new Metro Transit Terminal (near Downsview) is in operation. The issue of people crossing at the Old Sackville Road/Beaverbank Road/Walker Service Road off ramp has to be addressed.

MOVED BY Mr. John Merrick, seconded by Mr. Gunther Seyffarth that the Northwest Transit Advisory Committee recommends that the Northwest Community Council request that the appropriate HRM and Provincial Government Departments address the issue of public safety by providing a safe means to traverse the Old Sackville Road/Beaverbank Road/Walker Service Road/Beaverbank On/Off Ramp due to the increase in frequency of pedestrians crossing to the new Metro Transit Terminal.

In response to questions by the Northwest Transit Advisory Committee (NWTAC) regarding process, the Legislative Assistant advised that the NWTAC is an advisory committee to the Northwest Community Council (NWCC) and all recommendations would be forwarded to the Community Council. The NWTAC may suggest/recommend that the NWCC forward that request to the appropriate department/level of government but would not actually forward recommendations directly to another HRM or Provincial Government department.

WITHOUT A VOTE BEING TAKEN ON THE MOTION, the Committee expressed their wish to review their Terms of Reference prior to forwarding the above motion. Item to remain on the status sheet.

5. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS - None

6. **REPORTS - None**

7. **NEW BUSINESS / ADDED ITEMS**

7.1 **NEW BUSINESS**

7.1.1 **Route 85 AM Delays**

Mr. Phil Cox raised concern with Route 85 delays. He indicated that one rider has stopped using that route as it arrives too late into Halifax. The Route 85 used to arrive in downtown Halifax just before 8:00 am but now arrives around 8:15 am.

The Committee suggested/commented that;

- If there are only a limited number of connections meeting the Route 85 then it may be possible for it to leave five minutes earlier.
- Review the time that the Route 85 would have to leave Downsview in order to arrive on time in Halifax.
- The major pick-up of riders for the Route 85 is at the Beaverbank and Glendale stop and most of those riders are not connecting to another Route.

Mr. Scribner commented that if missing connections is not a major issue then a review of the departure time from Downsview may be considered. He added that it is too late to make changes for February.

7.1.2 **New Sackville Bus Transit Terminal**

During the ensuing discussion on the matter, members of the Committee raised the following comments/concerns:

- No one seems to be using the terminal. People are parking at Downsview due to delays getting across the Old Sackville Road. Many options have been discussed such as traffic signals, a four way stop, cross hatching the lanes to prevent blocking of the intersection.

The Committee members explained that this concern was previously expressed to Metro Transit and they were told that crossing the intersection would not be a problem. Mr. Scribner responded that Metro Transit commented that the situation was "far less than ideal" and the area would be monitored but at this time a solution is not known.

- The time you would gain on the METRO LINK would be lost at this intersection.

- Mr. Scribner commented that the METRO LINK bus may be able to be equipped with an auxiliary sensor to help clear the intersection faster (by tripping the light).
- Suggested that the stop by the tire store be improved for those riders coming from the Trailer Park.
 - Walker Connector route has been reviewed by Occupational Health and Safety who have determined that the road is not too narrow.
 - The line down the centre of the lane on the Walker Connector Road will be corrected when weather is more conducive.
 - Shoulder widening will be done on the Walker Connector Road.
 - Concern was expressed that 175 parking spots at the terminal may not be sufficient.
 - The Metro Link will commence operation from the terminal on February 19th.
 - The wind is very strong at this location (terminal is located on a bit of a hill).
 - The bus bays at the terminal are quite a distance apart. Riders have to walk about six bus lengths to get to their bus. Mr. Scribner advised that this will be reviewed and if it is determined that the Route 80 is more in demand that bus could be situated in the centre bay to split the distance.
 - The METRO LINK will have its own designated spot close to the building.
 - The Park and Ride spaces at Downsview are not cleared of snow. Snow is being ploughed into that area so that the spaces are not accessible. Mr. Scribner advised that snow removal is the responsibility of the mall as the land belongs to the mall. If Metro Transit receives complaints, they could contact the mall to notify them of the complaints received regarding snow removal/lack of snow removal.
 - The Committee requested that adequate washroom facilities be included in the terminal building.

7.1.3 Fast Ferry

Mr. Scribner commented that the Fast Ferry project is in the five to ten year plan.

7.2 ADDED ITEMS

7.2.1 2006 Meeting Schedule

The Legislative Assistant circulated the 2006 Meeting Schedule. The Committee approved the schedule as presented.

7.2.2 Lucasville Road Transit Service

- An e-mail request regarding transit service to the Lucasville Road, dated January

17, 2006, to Councillor Johns was forwarded to the NWTAC committee for consideration.

The Committee commented that this issue has been previously discussed and a report, dated October 19, 2005, sent to the Northwest Community Council indicating that extension of service to the Lucasville Road and Patton Road areas are to be given priority consideration once current transit deficiencies are addressed.

Contact information for the resident is to be forwarded to Metro Transit and Metro Transit is requested to respond to the resident with the standard response letter.

7.2.3 Bus Service - Route 87

Mr. Scribner provided a verbal update on the Route 87. No further action required.

7.2.4 Cobequid Community Health Centre - Transit Service

The Committee commented that the request for adequate transit service to the new Cobequid Community Health Centre was recommended when the news was first received that there would be a new health facility. At that time, it was discussed that the new facility offered an opportunity to plan for better transit service directly to the Cobequid Community Health Centre (to the door) as the current Centre is poorly serviced by transit.

The Committee expressed extreme concern that the new Centre will not have direct (to the door) transit service. It was stated that Metro Transit was made aware of the Committee's request for such service as Metro Transit has a presence at each Committee meeting via their Staff Liaison person. The Committee had also requested to review the site plan, with comment from Transit on the design, but did not receive that information.

Mr. Don Scribner explained that the transit service will be to within 400m of the facility.

MOVED BY Mr. Ron McKinnon, seconded by Mr. Gunther Seyffarth that the Northwest Transit Advisory Committee recommend the Northwest Community Council recommend to Regional Council that Metro Transit be directed to ensure that there is direct transit service available (inbound and outbound) to the new Cobequid Community Health Centre scheduled to open on February 20, 2006. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

8. **NEXT MEETING DATE** - February 15, 2006

9. **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Chris Newson
Legislative Assistant