

TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE  
MINUTES

July 5, 2012

MEMBERS

PRESENT:

Councillor Reg Rankin, Chair  
Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice-Chair  
Councillor David Hendsbee  
Councillor Darren Fisher  
Councillor Jackie Barkhouse  
Councillor Jerry Blumenthal  
Councillor Debbie Hum  
Councillor Bob Harvey

STAFF:

Mr. Ken Reashor, Director, Transportation & Public Works  
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. in the Council Chamber, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, 90 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

**2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – May 24, 2012**

**MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Blumenthal, that the Transportation Standing Committee minutes of May 24, 2012 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

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

**Added item:**

9.1 MusGo Rider Community Transit Pilot

At the request of the Committee, Mr. Brad Anguish, Director, Community & Recreation Services, updated that it was staffs' intent to have the report for Item 7.1.3 'Amendments to Admin Order 39 and By-law T-108', ready for the consideration of the Committee today, although in order to provide a quality report, the deadline was not met. He proposed bringing the report forward for the August meeting, and that the Committee defer the other two taxi-related items on the agenda to the August meeting, to deal with them all at once. This will provide more time for members provide sufficient review of the matters.

**Deferred items:** (to the August 8, 2012 TSC meeting)

4.1.1 Correspondence from Casino Taxi Ltd.

7.1.3 Amendments to Administrative Order 39 and By-law T-108, Respecting the Regulation of Taxis and Limousines (*report to be circulated*)

Info Item #1 Taxi Medallion Proposal (*information report dated June 18, 2012*)

Councillors Barkhouse and Hendsbee joined the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Councillor Blumenthal requested that the Committee allow Ms. Theresa Horwill, Chair of the Advisory Committee for Accessibility in HRM, to speak on item 7.6.2 relating to correspondence regarding the Metro Transit Universal Accessibility Plan, to which the Committee agreed.

**MOVED by Councillor Fisher, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the order of business be approved, as amended. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**4. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & PRESENTATIONS**

**4.1 Correspondence**

**4.1.1 Correspondence from Casino Taxi Ltd. dated June 12, 2012**

This item was deferred to the August 8, 2012 Transportation Standing Committee meeting. Refer to page 3, item 3 for details.

**4.2 Petitions - None**

**4.3 Presentations - None**

**5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES - None**

**6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS – Date**

**6.1 Staff Update & Discussion on Commuter Rail Feasibility Study** (deferred from May 24, 2012 meeting)

Ms. Patricia Hughes, Supervisor, Service Design & Projects, Metro Transit, provided a verbal update to the Committee. Ms. Hughes indicated that the study has not been able to progress without the involvement of CN. Staff spoke with the strategic planning department at Via Rail, as per direction from the Committee, and although they are willing to work with HRM, their mandate is to provide intercity rail, not commuter rail and it is unlikely that they would run a commuter rail service in HRM.

Councillor Hendsbee suggested the staff discuss partnerships with other counties such as Colchester and Hants, and look at Go Transit service in Toronto which is operated by Via Rail.

Responding to questions from the Committee, Ms. Hughes clarified that staff intend to keep working on the feasibility study and will bring forward an update report to Regional Council by September.

Mr. Ken Reashor, Director, Transportation & Public Works, noted that commuter rail and high speed ferry are longer term initiatives, and in the shorter term HRM will continue to utilize the transit bus system. Staff will continue to pursue commuter rail, although they need the current litigation to resolve to have CN as a participant in the feasibility study.

**7. REPORTS**

**7.1 STAFF**

**7.1.1 SmartTrip E-Pass – 2013-14 Fiscal Year**

A staff report dated May 30, 2012 was before the Committee.

**MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Fisher, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council approve the extension of the SmartTrip E-Pass to the 2013/14 fiscal year.**

Responding to questions with regard to the delay of the rollout of the program to January 1, 2013, Mr. David McCusker, Manager, Strategic Transportation Planning, explained that Metro Transit staff have indicated that creating passes that are effective for a full calendar year (ie. beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>) are better comprehended and more easily enforced by drivers.

Councillor Watts noted disappointment in the delay.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

#### **7.1.2 Macdonald Bridge Sidewalk Deck Panels**

A staff report dated July 24, 2012 was before the Committee.

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommends that Halifax Regional Council approve in principle the report “Macdonald Bridge Sidewalk Deck Panels: Active Transportation Applications, Final Report, June 2012” and that Halifax Harbour Bridges be requested to donate one hundred and twenty sidewalk deck panels and six hundred metres of railing to the Halifax Regional Municipality for re-use in Active Transportation bridges.**

Councillor Hendsbee clarified that he and Councillor Barkhouse are members of the Halifax Harbour Bridges Board of Commissioners.

A brief discussion was held on the redecking and resulting closure of the pedestrian and bicycle lanes. Councillors Hendsbee advised that a presentation had been made at a recent board meeting on this topic. The Committee requested that Halifax Harbour Bridges staff make a similar presentation to Regional Council on the redecking and resulting closure of the pedestrian and bicycle lanes.

**MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

#### **7.1.3 Amendments to Administrative Order 39 and By-law T-180, Respecting the Regulation of Taxis and Limousines**

This item was deferred to the August 8, 2012 Transportation Standing Committee meeting. Refer to page 3, item 3 for details.

#### **7.2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

### **7.2.1 Councillor Watts – Update on Peninsula Bus Corridor Project (oral)**

A project overview sheet entitled 'Cross-Peninsula Transit Corridor' was circulated to the Committee.

Mr. David McCusker, Manager, Strategic Transportation Planning, provided an update on the Cross-Peninsula Transit Corridor study, reviewing the objectives and benefits of the study, as well as the tasks completed and to-be completed to date. Mr. McCusker reviewed a preliminary map of what the project will look like and an aerial view of an example of what a transfer point for local route transfers will look like.

Responding to questions from Councillor Watts regarding the corridor project in context of the Bayers Road widening, Mr. McCusker indicated that the objective of the Corridor project is to make bus service better. The plan will not include anything for increasing vehicle capacity, it is focused on adding dedicated transit capacity without the need for additional buses.

### **7.3 MATTERS REFERRED FROM REGIONAL COUNCIL - None**

### **7.4 MATTERS REFERRED FROM STANDING COMMITTEES - None**

### **7.5 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

#### **7.5.1 Update from Councillor Watts (verbal)**

Councillor Watts provided an updated on the Active Transportation Advisory Committee, including the following:

- Recent discussions on the re-decking of the Macdonald Bridge, the resulting closure of the pedestrian and cycling lanes for 18 months, and opportunities the re-decking may present for the re-configuration of cycling access to the bridge.
- The Active Transportation Review is being worked on by the Committee and will be coming back in the fall.
- Bike Corridor public consultations meetings.
- Annual counting of cyclists crossing the peninsula.

The Committee held a brief discussion on the reduction of speeds in school zones in Nova Scotia starting in September from 50 km/h to 30 km/h, and signage and communications efforts being undertaken with regard to this change.

### **7.6 ACCESSIBILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **7.6.1 Update from Councillor Blumenthal (verbal)**

Councillor Blumenthal extended thanks to staff for the installation of a pool lift at the Needham Centre, which was installed as a result of an accessibility inspection completed by members of the Accessibility Advisory Committee.

### **7.6.2 Correspondence from the Accessibility Advisory Committee dated June 26, 2012 re: Metro Transit Universal Accessibility Plan**

Correspondence from the Accessibility Advisory Committee dated June 26, 2012 was before the Committee.

Councillor Blumenthal introduced Ms. Theresa Horwill, Chair, Accessibility Advisory Committee.

Ms. Horwill indicated that the Accessibility Advisory Committee is an advisory committee to the Transportation Standing Committee. She noted disappointment with the flow of information from the Standing Committee to the Advisory Committee, using the example of the Universal Accessibility Plan which was provided to the Standing Committee but not the Advisory Committee. She also indicated that the Committee was disappointed to learn that the Universal Accessibility Plan does not support manual announcements of transit stops by bus drivers until the medium term goal of audible announcements are installed in Metro Transit buses.

Councillor Watts thanked Ms. Horwill for bringing these issues to their attention, and congratulated the Accessibility Advisory Committee on a successful Town Hall Meeting on Accessibility held last month.

Mr. Ken Reashor, Director, Transportation & Public Works, apologized for the lack of communication with the Advisory Committee. He advised that Metro Transit have indicated a willingness to appoint a staff member to the Advisory Committee, which should help with proper feedback. Staff will also discuss protocols to ensure that the Advisory Committee are consulted on matters that may relate to their mandate.

Responding to questions from the Committee, Ms. Patricia Hughes, Metro Transit, clarified that an update report is forthcoming on the technology roadmap. The report is being prepared in with ICT services, which is working on preparing the technological groundwork for the for the AVL system.

Responding to questions from the Chair with regard to a timeline for delivery of the AVL system, Mr. Reashor indicated that staff will try to include a timeline in the information report.

The Chair thanked Ms. Horwill for attending.

**8. MOTIONS - None**

**9. ADDED ITEMS**

**9.1 MusGo Rider Community Transit Pilot**

A draft letter of intent was circulated to the Committee.

Mr. David McCusker, Manager, Strategic Transportation Planning, reminded that MusGo Rider made a presentation to the Transportation Standing Committee on May 24, 2012. The Committee approved a motion at that meeting requesting a staff report discussing three requests made by MusGo in their presentation, as follows:

1. For HRM to assist MusGo with obtaining vehicle financing for the bus from the Credit Union;
2. For \$10,000 in financial support for operating costs;
3. For support and commitment from HRM to prioritize rural transportation concerns.

Mr. McCusker noted that there is an expiry to the NSTRIP funds MusGo has applied for; which is why this matter is being brought forward as an added item, due to the time sensitivity of the funding. The staff recommendation in the report that is yet to be finalized will be that there is no mechanism for budget allocation for the \$10,000. Staff will be putting together a program for providing operational funding support to community-led rural transit projects within HRM, for Council's consideration over the next few months, for inclusion in the 2013-14 budget.

Mr. McCusker reviewed the draft letter of intent that MusGo Rider could use to provide to the province to give their project weight. The letter outlines the intention of HRM to develop such a program for providing operational funding support to community-led transit projects within HRM.

Councillor Hendsbee noted that there is \$325,000 in the "Rural Transportation Plan" Account CNU01289, and asked that staff to look into whether funds for MusGo Rider could be allocated from that account. The Chair noted that to prevent MusGo from losing funding from NSTRIP, that staff may wish to bring this matter directly to Council.

Discussion ensued on the topic, with it being noted that policies and funding mechanisms need to be developed first, to avoid setting a precedent.

**MOVED by Councillor Hendsbee, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the Transportation Standing Committee request a staff report on developing a program for providing operational funding support to community-led rural transit projects within HRM. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

**10. NOTICES OF MOTION - None**

## 11. IN CAMERA

**MOVED by Councillor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Watts, that the Transportation Standing Committee rise and go into a private In Camera session, in accordance with Section 19 of the Halifax Regional Municipality Charter, for the purpose of dealing with the items listed under agenda item 11. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

The Committee recessed at 12:08 p.m. to convene In Camera. All of the items listed under item 15 were dealt with In Camera.

The Committee reconvened at 12:18 p.m.

The following motion from the In Camera session was ratified at this time:

**MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Hum, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Halifax Regional Council appoint the applicant indicated as 'Option 1' to the Accessibility Advisory Committee to fill a vacant term position expiring November 30, 2012, and appoint the applicant indicated as Option 2 as the back-up should Option 1 not be able to accept the appointment to the Committee. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.**

## 12. NEXT MEETING – August 8, 2012

The next meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee is scheduled for Thursday, August 8, 2012, at 1:00 p.m. in the Dartmouth Council Chamber, 90 Alderney Drive, Dartmouth.

## 13. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 12:20 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle  
Legislative Assistant

### **INFORMATION ITEMS**

**1. Taxi Medallion Proposal – Information Report dated June 18, 2012**

This item was deferred to the August 8, 2012 Transportation Standing Committee meeting. Refer to page 3, item 3 for details.