

TRANSPORTATION STANDING COMMITTEE
MINUTES

March 14, 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Reg Rankin, Chair
Councillor Jennifer Watts, Vice-Chair
Councillor David Hendsbee
Councillor Jackie Barkhouse
Councillor Jerry Blumenthal
Councillor Debbie Hum
Deputy Mayor Jim Smith (non-member)
Councillor Barry Dalrymple (non-member)

REGRETS: Councillor Darren Fisher

STAFF: Mr. Ken Reashor, Director, Transportation & Public
Works/Traffic Authority
Ms. Sherryl Murphy, Deputy Clerk
Ms. Jennifer Weagle, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 2:44 p.m.

The Chair noted that Deputy Mayor Jim Smith and Councillor Barry Dalrymple are present today, although they are not members of the Committee.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED by Councillor Hum, seconded by Councillor Hendsbee, that the minutes of the February 28, 2011 meeting of the Transportation Standing Committee be approved.

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

Addition:

8.1 Councillor Blumenthal – Potholes at north-end Barrington Street

Information Item #1: Dartmouth Bridge Terminal Funding Options was moved to be addressed under Item #5: Business Arising Out of the Minutes

The Committee agreed to the agenda, as amended.

4. CORRESPONDENCE, PETITIONS & DELEGATIONS

4.1 Correspondence

Correspondence was before the Committee from Tom Ruth, President & CEO, Halifax International Airport Authority dated March 11, 2011 regarding the extension of Metro Transit Service to the Halifax Stanfield International Airport.

4.2 Petitions - None

5. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

5.1 Dartmouth Bridge Terminal Funding Options

An information report was before the Committee dated March 8, 2011.

The Chair clarified that this special meeting was called at the request of staff to discuss funding options for the Nantucket Transit Terminal.

Mr. Ken Reashor, Director, Transportation & Public Works, clarified that staff are following Council's direction to find funding options within the transit budget for the construction of the Nantucket Transit Terminal. Several options are presented in the information report for discussion and to obtain feedback from the Committee before bringing the options to Council. There is no expectation of a recommendation from the Committee today, which is why the options are presented as an information report.

Councillor Barkhouse arrived at 2:50 p.m.

Mr. David Reage, Acting Manager, Service Delivery, Metro Transit, briefly reviewed the three funding options outlined in the information report.

MOVED by Councillor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council postpone construction of the Lacewood Transit Terminal and reallocate funding for that project to the Nantucket Transit Terminal.

Councillors discussed the information report, raising the following concerns and suggestions:

- Request more detailed information on the options identified before making a recommendation;
- clarification on why these three options were chosen;
- if construction of the Lacewood Terminal would take place over several years, then could funding for both terminals be spread out over several years to accommodate the construction of both;
- similarly, if the delivery date of the Woodside Ferry is 2014, whether some of the funds identified for this project could be shared with the Nantucket terminal in the meantime;
- concern that currently the Woodside Ferry is operating at maximum capacity and the second ferry is required to service this increased capacity;
- concern that the Lacewood Terminal is required to accommodate the high level of transit users in that area;
- what the three million dollar difference would mean to the transit tax rate;
- how firm the three million dollar figure is, if it could end up coming in at more or less;
- whether there is a possibility to take funds from all three options identified in the report to make up the difference.

Staff responded to questions of clarification from members, noting the following:

- The three projects identified in the information report were the only projects that staff identified that could individually support the required budget gap of three million dollars;

- There is some degree of time sensitivity with regard to making a decision on the funding direction, as the budget is being presented next month and the funds will have to be identified before then.

After members had spoken on this matter, the Committee agreed to allow the non-member Councillors present to speak.

Councillor Dalrymple commented on the importance of implementing transit service to the airport, noting that the Halifax Stanfield International Airport is willing to increase their capital support of this project to \$500,000.

Deputy Mayor Smith inquired whether the tender for the bridge terminal is still in effect and if staff are able to confirm the price with the contractor.

The motion on the floor was voted on at this time, as follows:

MOVED by Councillor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse, that the Transportation Standing Committee recommend that Regional Council postpone construction of the Lacewood Transit Terminal and reallocate funding for that project to the Nantucket Transit Terminal. MOTION DEFEATED.

MOVED by Councillor Watts, seconded by Councillor Hum that, with regard to identifying funding options for the Nantucket Transit Terminal, the Transportation Standing Committee request that:

1. Staff explore the possibility of incremental reductions to all three projects to cover the funding shortfall, including potential savings through timing and phasing;
2. Staff consider requesting Council to set an upper limit cost for the Nantucket Transit Terminal;
3. Staff explore what affect this service increase would have on the general tax rate and the regional transit tax rate; and
4. That staff look at other capital budget lines to re-allocate funds to this project, including considering the "Q103" capital surplus reserve and the "Crespool" reserve.

Mr. Reage indicated that staff will try to bring forward a report for the March 24, 2011 meeting.

MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

6. CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS

6.1 TERMS OF REFERENCE

7. REPORTS

7.1 ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

7.1.1 Update from Councillor Watts (verbal)

No update at this time.

7.2 ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

7.2.1 Update from Councillor Blumenthal (verbal)

No update at this time.

8. ADDED ITEMS

8.1 Councillor Blumenthal – Potholes on North-end of Barrington Street

Councillor Blumenthal distributed emails from Charlene Dill dated March 13 and March 4, 2011.

MOVED by Councillor Blumenthal, seconded by Councillor Barkhouse, that staff respond to Ms. Charlene Dill's concerns regarding potholes on the north-end of Barrington Street. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 24, 2011 at 2:00 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Jennifer Weagle
Legislative Assistant