

NORTH WEST TRANSIT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Wednesday, June 15, 2005

PRESENT: Mr. Bill Chaffey, Vice-Chair
Mr. John Merrick
Mr. Ron McKinnon
Mr. Troy Mitchell
Mr. Gunther Seyffarth
Councillor Brad Johns

ABSENT: Mr. Phil Cox, Chair (regrets)
Mr. Alastair Lawrie (regrets)

STAFF: Mr. Edward Robar, Coordinator, Transit Scheduling
Ms. Chris Newson, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 7:19 pm in the Boardroom, Metro Transit Offices, 200 Ilsley Avenue, Dartmouth.

2. APPROVAL OF ORDER OF BUSINESS AND ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

The agenda was approved as presented.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - None

4. BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF THE MINUTES

4.1 Status Sheet Item

4.1.1 Pedestrian Access New Sackville BRT Terminal Update

Councillor Johns advised there is a development agreement coming forward to the North West Community Council in which the Developer will include a sidewalk from the existing apartments on the Old Sackville Road to the new development. The Developer will build the sidewalk on two-thirds of that road leaving approximately only 500' to the intersection without sidewalk. Councillor Johns commended staff for taking the initiative to have this work included in the development agreement.

Councillor Johns responded to Mr. Merrick that the access from the nearby trailer court is being reviewed by traffic services.

4.1.2 Transit Subsidy Report Update

Mr. Merrick and Mr. Chaffey advised they have been working on the proposed 2006 charts. Information for those charts was not available at this time as there is some input required. One assumption is that the majority, if not all, transit (pass) users in Bedford/Sackville are students. All other regular bus users purchase tickets. Currently, Mr. Merrick and Mr. Chaffey are attempting to establish what the impact of the SMU U-Pass was and then project what impact the Dal U-Pass will have. Mr. Chaffey added that they will attempt to extrapolate the difference of those who use passes vs. student passes. Mr. Robar added that information could be obtained from the ticket vendors. He further commented that the information is to show the impact of the Dal U-Pass and whether what Metro Transit is putting in place will cover the demand.

The prediction is that in 2006 there will be a number of people standing unless there are more buses or more runs available. Councillor Johns advised that he receives numerous e-mails from people who are already standing and offered to forward those e-mails to Mr. Chaffey and Mr. Merrick.

Mr. Robar commented that the majority of students will affect three major terminals: Dartmouth Shopping Centre, Lacewood Drive and Mumford Road. He further advised that the majority of students living off campus reside in the Sackville area.

Councillor Johns suggested the closure of the Bell Road NSCC campus may have an impact as the campus will be moving to the Dartmouth side. Mr. Robar advised that 2007 is the projected date for the Dartmouth NSCC campus.

Councillor Johns further commented that the Regional Plan promotes regional hubs which would support Mr. Seyffarth's comments for a park and ride in Upper Sackville.

4.1.3 U-Pass Update

The Dal U-Pass will be in effect as of January 2006. See item 4.1.2 above for additional comments on the U-Pass.

4.1.4 MSVU Shelter Update

The Committee agreed that additional Councillors be requested to contribute to the MSVU shelter and not just the District 16 Councillor as it is not only District 16 residents who use the shelter. Councillor Johns suggested that a recommendation go forward from this Committee to Metro Transit that Metro Transit increase their budget to provide more shelters.

MOVED BY Councillor Brad Johns, seconded by Mr. John Merrick that the North West Transit Advisory Committee request Metro Transit consider, during their budget deliberations, an increase to their budget for bus shelters. MOTION PUT AND PASSED.

4.1.5 Pedestrian Push Button - Update

Staff are requesting clarification on what action is being requested by the Committee regarding this matter.

The Committee agreed that green time at the lights is important but the push buttons do

not work in the way staff describes. Mr. McKinnon commented that if you do not push the button you will not get the cycle. Mr. Chaffey added that you have to push the button so many seconds before the cycle changes or it will not change.

Mr. Robar was asked to confirm if Bedford has the SCOOT program for traffic signalization.

5. Consideration of Deferred Business - None

6. Reports - None

7. New Business / Added Items

7.1 New Business

7.1.1 Volunteer to Serve on the Fast Ferry Cultivation Project

Councillor Johns advised that he requested that the Regional Planning Committee consider using the NWTAC more often as it is the only transit committee in HRM. He suggested that the volunteer be a resident of the Bedford area since the Fast Ferry will be in Bedford.

Mr. John Merrick volunteered for the Fast Ferry Committee.

Councillor Johns commented that in regards to the Fast Ferry, he sees more flexibility for using transit - if you are just trying to transport bodies, there is better use for the money than a fast ferry. Mr. Chaffey added that there would be fewer cars on the road but the fast ferry will not really provide transit.

Mr. Robar commented that the Fast Ferry would open up that location as more of a hub for transit service and would create a service to that terminal. The transit rider could then decide to take either a transit bus or the ferry. He added more transit routes may have to be added to get people to the ferry. That would be good as buses carry more passengers than a ferry.

7.1.2 Temporary Transit Stop Relocations at Duke & Barrington

Mr. Robar advised that an advertisement was in the weekend paper regarding the sidewalk improvements, including work to incorporate the BRT service, being done at the

Barrington Street/Duke Street terminal. 550 buses per day travel that route. The section behind Scotia Square will be closed for approximately two weeks. Operators will use that section for some runs (Route 3, 7 and 9) but will not be sitting for any length of time due to the road work. Drivers will wait long enough to transfer passengers only. They will make up their time at the next stop but not on Barrington Street (drivers discretion). He added the work will be done in three phases and will incorporate both sides of the street.

Mr. Robar explained that the decision to incorporate this work along with the road construction was very fast and Metro Transit only had one week's notice. Metro Transit met with the drivers and explained the procedure as well as doing marketing to notify the public. He added that Scotia Square is involved with the design project but the project is being encouraged by the Capital District.

Councillor Johns suggested that Metro Transit ensure it is involved/notified of any realignment strategy discussions regarding the Cogswell Street interchange area as it is a key area for Metro Transit.

7.1.3 Membership

Councillor Johns, on behalf of the North West Transit Advisory Committee, presented a gift to Mr. Troy Mitchell in recognition of his service on the North West Transit Advisory Committee. Councillor Johns stated that Mr. Mitchell had been a great asset to the Committee. *(Mr. Mitchell had previously indicated that he would be resigning effective as of June 15, 2005).*

The Legislative Assistant advised that a report would be going forward to the North West Community Council this fall regarding membership opportunities for this Committee.

7.2 Added Items

Councillor Johns advised that Mr. McKinnon's suggestion to have a bus to the airport is being talked about at Regional Planning. Mr. Robar advised that Mr. Silver had contacted Acadia Lines regarding this service and Acadia Lines are considering that option.

Councillor Johns requested that Roxane MacInnis, Planner, Regional Planning, present at the next meeting regarding Transit.

8. NEXT MEETING DATE - September 19, 2005.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm with an invitation being extended to all members who wished to remain for a tour of the Metro Transit facility.

Chris Newson
Legislative Assistant