



REGULAR BUSINESS

**MEETING OF THE
ST. JOHN'S TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION**

A meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission was held on Thursday, February 28, 2019 commencing at Noon at the Metrobus Transit Centre, 25 Messenger Drive.

Present at the meeting were:

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| Wally Collins | Chair/Councillor |
| Shawn Skinner | Vice Chair |
| Colleen Galgay | Commissioner |
| Ian Froude | Commissioner/City Councillor |
| Dave Lane | Commissioner/City Councillor |
| Kirsten Morry | Commissioner |
| Paul Walsh | Commissioner |
| Kevin Breen | City Manager |
| Judy Powell | General Manager |
| Linda Ryan | Administrative Assistant |

Absent: Derek Coffey Deputy City Manager, Financial Management

I. PROCEDURAL

- The Chair called the meeting to order.
- L. Ryan recorded the minutes of the meeting.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

- Vice Chair Skinner moved that the agenda for this meeting date be approved as circulated; Commissioner Walsh seconded the motion.
- Commissioner Lane moved that the minutes of the regular business meeting of the Commission held on January 24, 2018 be approved as distributed; Commissioner Froude seconded the motion.

III. BUSINESS ARISING

1. Transit Shelters

- A cost estimate of \$80,000 for the installation of shelter pads plus an additional \$77,000 annually for increased maintenance and snow-clearing, was provided previously for the potential relocation/re-installation of 20 transit shelters. (These are transit shelters to be removed throughout the system and replaced with new, accessible models).
- Commissioner Froude informed that the cost for pad installations has been included in the draft list for the City's capital items, which is expected to be approved in the coming weeks.
- Metrobus Maintenance employees are determining the number of shelters that are to be discarded or recycled. It was noted that some shelters have been committed to the City of Mount Pearl for its use.
- Land acquisition for transit shelter sites remains a challenge.
- K. Breen suggested that Metrobus find savings in its current budget to absorb the additional costs associated with this new item as proposed by Commissioner Froude.
- It was noted that following approval by the Commission's Finance Committee of the 2019 Budget, D. Coffey, Deputy City Manager, Financial Management requested, at a meeting of the full Commission on October 24, 2018, to eliminate an additional \$85,000 from the Commission's subsidy application. The General Manager advised that it would, therefore, be difficult to find any further monies in the budget at this time to cover the cost of this item.

1. Transit Shelters (Continued)

- The General Manager further reminded that earlier this year, Metrobus had achieved a cost savings in its operating expenses of \$50,000, but that was quickly eaten by rising GoBus costs.
- Since GoBus responsibility was transferred to Metrobus two (2) years ago, any realized savings from Metrobus operations have been absorbed by overages in GoBus operations.
- Commissioner Froude observed that the Commission inherited the City's GoBus operations in 2017, and it is unfair to require Metrobus to have to use its cost savings on operating expenses to cover continually increasing costs for GoBus services.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Executive Summary (Regular)

- The Executive Summary for January, 2019 was reviewed and the following items were noted:
 - Ridership of 271,039 was up 7.2% from the same month in 2018 (252,948) and was 7.2% ahead of budget. This is the seventh consecutive month of a five plus percent (5+%) increase in ridership.
 - GoBus rides on the Metrobus system are also trending upward, which is a positive sign.
 - Commissioner Froude congratulated Metrobus on the significant increase in ridership and suggested the encouraging news be shared with all employees.
 - Commissioner Galgay noted that roof repairs are needed despite the facility being relatively new. It was noted that the contractor warranty on the building has now expired.
 - Transmission issues continue with the Community Bus. The vehicle remains out-of-service and is being replaced temporarily with a Vicinity bus in order to continue to serve customers along this popular route for seniors.

2. Financial Statements—January, 2019

- Financials for the period January 1, 2019 to January 31, 2019 were tabled and discussed.
- It was noted that the average price of diesel fuel was \$1.0771 per litre in January compared to the budgeted price of \$1.16.

3. Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF) – New Projects

- The General Manager proposed the following three (3) projects for application under Phase 3 of the federal government Public Transit Infrastructure Fund (PTIF).

• Third-party Assessment Services

—As part of the Metrobus/GoBus Review, all 2,000 current GoBus users will require individualized, in-person third-party functional assessments to determine eligibility for service under the new eligibility criteria.

• New Community Bus

—A twenty-seven-and-a-half foot (27.5') Vicinity model bus (estimated life of twelve (12) years versus five (5) years of the current bus model) is needed to sustain the service.

—This item is dependent on a successful grant application to operate the Community Bus service for seniors (potentially \$100,000) under the Province's new Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador Communities Grant Program for the current fiscal year.

—Previously approved under Phase 1 of PTIF, this item would be cancelled and re-application made under Phase 3 of the program as application would now be made for a different style bus.

• Transit Shelter Pads

—This item was referenced under Section III 'Business Arising', Item #1 'Transit Shelters'. New shelter pads for the relocation and re-installation of 20 transit shelters is estimated at \$80,000.

ACTION: It was moved by Commissioner Walsh, seconded by Commissioner Lane and carried unanimously that the projects outlined by the General Manager be approved for application under the PTIF Program.

4. Government of Newfoundland Labrador's Community Transportation Program

- On Tuesday, February 25th, Metrobus hosted The Honourable Lisa Dempster, Minister of Children, Seniors and Social Development, Minister Responsible for the Status of Persons with Disabilities, and Minister Responsible for the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation for an announcement regarding the Province's new "Newfoundland and Labrador Community Transportation Program" (formerly the Age-Friendly Transportation Project). Mayor Danny Breen also attended.
- With an annual investment of \$300,000 from the Provincial Government, the Community Transportation grant program will provide incorporated municipalities and not-for-profit groups, Indigenous governments and communities throughout the Province, the opportunity to obtain support to develop, implement and evaluate a community-based transportation program that is inclusive and accessible.
- Eligible proponents will be able to apply for up to \$100,000 for projects that demonstrate clear evidence of volunteer involvement, collaboration, and sustainability. The deadline for applications is Tuesday, March 19, 2019. Metrobus will apply under this new program for funds to continue operating the Community Bus service.
- The purpose of the new program is to make funding available for a wider range of community transportation needs, following the recent evaluation of the Age-Friendly Transportation Pilot.
- Metrobus had received grants under the Age-Friendly Transportation Project for four (4) consecutive years, (2014-2018) totalling \$400,000, to operate the popular Community Bus for seniors.

IV. OTHER (Information/Community)

1. Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) Conference

- The St. John's Transportation Commission and Metrobus will host the CUTA 2019 Spring Symposium on May 14-16, 2019 in St. John's.
- National board meetings will be held on May 13th. The General Manager chairs the CUTA Atlantic Region Committee.
- Between 200 and 250 delegates from across North America and Europe are expected to join in discussions and share their expertise.
- Delegates at this upcoming event will explore cutting-edge technology in transit. Highlights include high-calibre speakers on sessions focused on top transit issues, industry trends showcase, roundtables, a technical tour of the Metrobus transit facility, valuable networking and information sharing with a focus on putting the customer at the heart of transit.
- The Premier has been invited to speak at the Opening Breakfast at the Delta Hotel on Wednesday, May 15th.
- The Mayor has been invited to bring greetings to delegates at the Symposium's Welcome Reception on the evening of Tuesday, May 14th to be held at The Rooms, or the Opening Breakfast on Wednesday, May 15th.
- The City will be asked to consider sponsorship of the breakfast meal.
- Conference registration fees for Commissioners and Metrobus employees are being negotiated with CUTA.

V. ADJOURNMENT

- There being no further regular business to discuss at this time, the meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 PM, immediately followed by the in camera meeting of the Commission.
- The next regular business meeting of the Commission will be held on Thursday, March 28, 2019 at Noon in the Board Room of the Metrobus Transit Centre.
- Commission meetings are generally held on the last Thursday of each month. Special meetings are called as needed.

Respectfully submitted,

Wally Collins
Chair

Linda Ryan
Administrative Assistant