



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

REGULAR BUSINESS

A meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission was held on Thursday, June 24th, 2021 at Noon. The meeting was streamed live via Webex.

Present at the meeting were:

Paul Walsh	Chair
Debbie Hanlon	Vice Chair/City Councillor
Jamie Korab	Commissioner/City Councillor
Kirsten Morry	Commissioner
Lynn Zurel	Commissioner
Tolulope Akerele	Commissioner
Derek Coffey	Deputy City Manager, Financial Management
Kevin Breen	City Manager
Judy Powell	Metrobus General Manager
Joan Mahon	Administrative Assistant

Absent: Maggie Burton Commissioner/City Councillor

I. PROCEDURAL

- The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:03 pm.
- J. Mahon recorded the minutes of the meeting of this date.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

➤ **AGENDA**

It was moved by Commissioner Akerele and seconded by Commissioner Korab that the agenda for this meeting date be approved.

➤ **MINUTES**

It was moved by Commissioner Zurel and seconded by Commissioner Akerele that the minutes of the May 27th, 2021 regular business meeting of the Commission be approved as distributed.

III. BUSINESS ARISING

1. COVID-19 - Update

➤ Ridership is in the 60% range for Metrobus and 70% of pre-covid levels for GoBus. The estimates in the GoBus budget is ridership at 70% by the end of June and 80% starting July 1st until the remainder of the year. Eastern Health has been contacted with regards to capacity levels on board the buses when MUN and other post-secondary institutions reopen in September. The public health team will discuss it and supply direction to us.

2. Transit Priority System

➤ The General Manager advised that the Transit Priority System is activated and operational.

3. On-Demand Software - Update

➤ The contract with Via Mobility is nearing completion. One insurance certificate update has been forwarded and the second one is pending. Everything is in place to begin the project.

4. RFP - Paratransit Service Contract

➤ The RFP has been held up in the Purchasing Department at the City for weeks. The intention was for it to have been issued, bids received and the RFP closed by this date. An update today indicates that it should be issued on June 25th. There are concerns with the delay as we are six months away from the end of the current contract. The General Manager expressed the need to prioritize this RFP.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Financial Statements - May, 2021

- The financial statements for the month of May, 2021 were tabled and reviewed.
- Commissioner Zurel had the following questions:
 - How refined is the budget? The General Manager assured her that the budget is based on past experience and ridership patterns - ridership during summer months versus ridership in September.
 - What are the professional fees associated with GoBus and why are they under-budget? The General Manager confirmed that the professional fees are the assessments and that Donna Power, Manager, Accessible Transit Services, will attend the Commission meeting on July 22nd, 2021, to provide an update on the process.
 - How are the billings for Mount Pearl and Paradise calculated? The General Manager advised that a per kilometer rate is set during budget time for the coming year based on actual expenses and allowances for overhead - the total cost to run the service.
 - When we emerge from Covid and approach normal comparisons – should the budget figures be compared to 2019 figures instead of 2020? The General Manager will have two years, 2020 and 2019 placed in the statements for comparison purposes.

2. Executive Summary (Regular) - May, 2021

- The Executive Summary for the month of May, 2021 was tabled for members' information.
- The Chair questioned the level of Maintenance repairs listed. The General Manager responded that there has been an increase in transmission issues. The manager of the Maintenance Department, D. Oliver, is looking to see if there are some other preventative provisions to be put in place. As far as the ongoing preventative maintenance – that is based on the kilometers each bus travels. The fleet is aging.

3. Funding for Shelters - City Capital Budget

- In 2019 the City allotted \$80,000 in their capital budget for shelters that was not spent in 2019 or 2020. We need to purchase shelters to have in stock. In order to maximize the value of the \$80,000, the General Manager would like to apply for funding under the ICIP Program. A 5' X 10' shelter costs approximately \$12,000 not including the cost of the shelter pad.

ACTION: It was moved by D. Coffey and seconded by Commissioner Akerele and carried unanimously that the Commission approve the project to purchase shelters.

The General Manager will apply to the ICIP Program for funding.

4. Funding - Replacement of Paratransit Fleet

- Confirmation has been received indicating that our application for funding has been moved from the Province to the Federal Government for approval. We anticipate hearing from them within the next few weeks. During the April 29th commission meeting the General Manager brought forward a request to proceed with the tender when funding is approved. The decision was delayed but approval of the commission is required to move forward with the tender once the funding is approved.
 - Commissioner Zurel is concerned that if a decision is made today it will set us behind 5 years before electrified buses can be purchased. The General Manager noted that electric buses of this design are new to the market and it will take some time to evaluate them. As the current fleet is now four years old and we were advised about a month ago that the earliest delivery would be November, 2022, we need to issue a tender as soon as possible.

4. Funding - Replacement of Paratransit Fleet cont'd

- The General Manager advised that each bus would be approximately \$100,000 making the contract approximately \$2,000,000.
- D. Coffey questioned if the release of the tender would be before or after funding has been approved. The General Manager advised that it would be after the funding has been approved.

ACTION: Vice Chair Hanlon made a motion to have a discussion with regards to releasing the tender. Commissioner Zurel seconded the motion. After a general discussion, it was carried unanimously that the tender will be released once funding is approved.

5. Funding - Electrification Plan

- The General Manager is working with Edmundo Fausto, Sustainability Coordinator, with the City to secure funding to hire a consultant to assist with the production of an Electrification Plan. The cost is estimated at \$125,000. This plan will be the path to electrification for Metrobus and GoBus moving forward in the next five years. There is funding available through the Federation of Municipalities and the National Research Council.
- D. Coffey is in full support of this plan but questioned the feasibility of the plan. The General Manager stated that the plan would be custom to Metrobus/GoBus and our environment, fleet size, infrastructure, our facility and the challenges that would need to be addressed to support the infrastructure.
- Commissioner Akerele questioned what are the costs associated in making the plan a reality. The General Manager advised that the costs would be included in the electrification plan.

V. OTHER (Information/Community)

- The General Manager noted that a lease for a van will be up in September. There is a tender out for a replacement vehicle and the results will be brought forward in the next commission meeting.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

- There being no further regular business to discuss at this time, the meeting adjourned at approximately 12:35 PM.
- Live streaming of the public meeting ended immediately followed by an in-camera business meeting of the Commission.
- The next regular business meeting of the Commission will be held at in the **Training Room at Metrobus, 25 Messenger Drive** at Noon on July 22nd, 2021.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Walsh
Chair

Joan Mahon
Recording Secretary