



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission
Thursday, October 27, 2022 12:00pm
In-Person at 25 Messenger Drive and via Webex

In attendance:

Paul Walsh	Chairperson
Ian Froude	Vice Chairperson/City Councillor
Lynn Zurel	Commissioner
Tolulope Akerele	Commissioner
Kirsten Morry	Commissioner
Derek Coffey	Deputy City Manager, Finance & Administration
Kevin Breen	City Manager
Ron Ellsworth	Commissioner/City Councillor
Maggie Burton	Commissioner/City Councillor
Judy Powell	General Manager
Jason Hussey	Manager, Finance
Donna Power	Administrative Assistant

I. PROCEDURAL

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:07 PM.

II. AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved by K. Breen; seconded by Commissioner Morry. Motion Carried.

III. MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the September 29, 2022 regular meeting as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Akerele; seconded by D. Coffey. Motion Carried.

IV. BUSINESS ARISING

1. Finance Committee Report on ICIP Funding Applications

A list of ongoing projects and funding applications was included with the meeting package with the proposed new projects, for which funding is being sought, highlighted in green.

<u>Approved Projects</u>		Total Cost	Net Rebate	Federal	Provincial	City
Fare Collection System Upgrade	Complete	\$418,025.43	\$379,080.00	\$169,638.00	\$126,347.36	\$83,094.64
Metrobus Shelters (10)	Ordered	\$222,000.00	\$201,317.32	\$80,526.93	\$67,099.06	\$53,691.33
Go Bus Replacement	Ordered	\$2,500,000.00	\$2,267,086.96	\$1,133,543.00	\$755,620.08	\$377,923.87
Shelter Cube Van	Approved	\$71,500.00	\$64,838.69	\$32,419.34	\$21,610.73	\$10,808.61
Community Bus Replacement	Approved	\$281,197.86	\$255,000.00	\$127,500.00	\$84,991.50	\$42,508.50
Replacement of 2001 Buses with Hybrid (6)	Submitted	\$6,680,000.00	\$6,057,656.35	\$3,028,828.17	\$2,019,016.86	\$1,009,811.31
Expansion of Fleet by 2 hybrid buses	Submitted	\$2,220,000.00	\$2,013,173.22	\$805,269.29	\$670,990.63	\$536,913.30
Stop Announcement System	Submitted	\$2,000,000.00	\$1,813,669.57	\$725,467.83	\$604,496.07	\$483,705.67
Farebox System & mcard Sys. Validator Replacement	Submitted	\$2,000,000.00	\$1,813,669.57	\$906,834.78	\$604,496.07	\$302,338.72
Radio system upgrade	Submitted	\$928,636.50	\$842,119.88	\$421,059.94	\$280,678.56	\$140,381.38
Replacement of 2007-08 Buses with electric (9) 2027	Drafted	\$13,500,000.00	\$12,242,269.57	\$6,121,134.78	\$4,080,348.45	\$2,040,786.34
Go Bus Replacement 2027	Drafted	\$9,000,000.00	\$8,161,513.04	\$4,080,756.52	\$2,720,232.30	\$1,360,524.22
Avalon Mall Shelters 2024	Drafted	\$500,000.00	\$453,417.39	\$226,708.70	\$151,124.02	\$75,584.68
Bus Shelters (10) 2024	Drafted	\$233,100.00	\$211,383.19	\$84,553.28	\$70,454.02	\$56,375.90
Bus Shelters (10) 2025	Drafted	\$244,755.00	\$221,952.35	\$110,976.17	\$73,976.72	\$36,999.46
Bus Shelters (10) 2026	Drafted	\$256,992.75	\$233,049.96	\$116,524.98	\$77,675.55	\$38,849.43
Expansion of Fleet by 4 electric buses 2027	Drafted	\$5,106,000.00	\$4,630,298.40	\$1,852,119.36	\$1,543,278.46	\$1,234,900.58
Shelter Cube Van 2026	Drafted	\$75,075.00	\$68,080.62	\$34,040.31	\$22,691.27	\$11,349.04
Infrastructure for Electrification of Fleet 2027		\$30,000,000.00	\$27,205,043.48	\$10,882,017.39	\$9,067,440.99	\$7,255,585.10
On-Demand Vehicles (10) (Hybrid) 2024-25-26		\$3,500,000.00	\$3,173,921.74	\$1,269,568.70	\$1,057,868.12	\$846,484.93
Solar panel kits for shelters (120) 2024		\$500,000.00	\$453,417.39	\$181,366.96	\$151,124.02	\$120,926.42
Building Camera system 2024		\$200,000.00	\$181,366.96	\$90,663.48	\$60,449.61	\$30,233.87
Total Metrobus future projects		\$80,437,282.54	\$72,943,325.63	\$32,481,537.90	\$24,312,010.43	\$16,149,777.29

The General Manager provided a brief description of each of these projects noting that applications will be submitted under the ICIP funding stream. Additionally, a new permanent transit fund is estimated to begin in 2 years.

Discussion:

- With the addition of the new shelters, an additional van will be required to complete maintenance of the shelters.
- At present, two solar panels will be installed on shelters to evaluate their effectiveness. If successful, all shelters will be upgraded to solar power.
- Replacing diesel buses with electric buses is not a one-to-one ratio due to range/charging capacity. Results of the electrification plan will help identify what is needed, but at present it is estimated that 13 buses will be required to replace the nine (9) 2007-08 diesel buses. Commissioner Akerele noted that growth of the service over the coming years should also be considered and suggested applying for 8 buses would be more appropriate.
- Funding applications should be written in such a way that there is flexibility to purchase vehicles of any alternative fuel source, not strictly electric.
- Projects will be assigned an order of priority, and applications submitted accordingly.

MOTION: To proceed with funding applications for each of the recommended projects as presented, with the following amendment:

- Increase the number of buses to expand the fleet from 4 to 8

The revised project list is described as follows:

Description	Total \$ Inc HST	Total \$ After Rebates	Federal %	Federal \$	Provincial %	Provincial \$	Total Funding	City Portion
Avalon Mall Shelters	\$ 500,000	\$ 453,417	50.00%	\$ 226,709	33.33%	\$ 151,124	\$ 377,833	\$ 75,584
Replacement of Paratransit Fleet 2027	\$ 9,000,000	\$ 8,161,513	50.00%	\$ 4,080,757	33.33%	\$ 2,720,236	\$ 6,800,993	\$ 1,360,520
New Accessible Bus Shelters (30)	\$ 735,000	\$ 666,524	40.00%	\$ 266,609	33.33%	\$ 222,153	\$ 488,762	\$ 177,762
Replacement of 2007-08 buses with electric/other propulsion buses 2027	\$ 13,500,000	\$ 12,242,270	50.00%	\$ 6,121,135	33.33%	\$ 4,080,355	\$ 10,201,489	\$ 2,040,780
Expand fleet with 8 electric/other propulsion buses 2027	\$ 12,000,000	\$ 10,882,017	40.00%	\$ 4,352,807	33.33%	\$ 3,626,982	\$ 7,979,789	\$ 2,902,229
Shelter van 2026	\$ 86,250	\$ 78,215	40.00%	\$ 31,286	33.33%	\$ 26,069	\$ 57,355	\$ 20,860
Infrastructure for electric/other propulsion buses 2027	\$ 30,000,000	\$ 27,205,043	40.00%	\$ 10,882,017	33.33%	\$ 9,067,455	\$ 19,949,472	\$ 7,255,571
On-Demand Hybrid buses	\$ 3,500,000	\$ 3,173,922	40.00%	\$ 1,269,569	33.33%	\$ 1,057,870	\$ 2,327,438	\$ 846,483
Solar Panel Kits for shelters	\$ 500,000	\$ 453,417	40.00%	\$ 181,367	33.33%	\$ 151,124	\$ 332,491	\$ 120,926
Upgrade Depot Camera System 2024	\$ 200,000	\$ 181,367	50.00%	\$ 90,683	33.33%	\$ 60,450	\$ 151,133	\$ 30,234
				\$ 27,502,939		\$ 21,163,818	\$ 48,666,755	\$ 14,830,949

Moved by Commissioner Akerele; seconded by Commissioner Ellsworth. Motion carried unanimously.

NOTE: For application purposes, a Minute of Approval was created for each individual project.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. General Manager's Report

With respect to the stop announcements project, Commissioner Akerele suggested that options be explored to introduce an interim measure to support individuals, particularly newcomers, who are currently struggling to utilize Metrobus.

ACTION: The General Manager will bring this suggestion to staff to explore options and determine the best approach.

Commissioner Ellsworth inquired about the increase in revenue compared to the increase in ridership; specifically, whether the 15% increase in ridership is coming from paying customers or from passengers availing of government funded passes.

ACTION: The General Manager will compile information to describe the current relationship between revenue and ridership and will provide this to the Commission.

Commissioner Ellsworth, noting that GoBus ridership is at approximately 80% of 2019 levels, inquired about GoBus' capacity and whether ability to accommodate rides is impacting that ridership level. The General Manager commented that impacts due to capacity issues would be indicated through trip denials, and these are not currently problematic. There are two buses out of service and MVT is facing staffing challenges, but there are not significant denials stemming from an inability to deliver trips.

Commissioner Zurel requested follow up on an inquiry from the September meeting about the status of plans to develop more accessible routes. The General Manager informed that plans are on track to make the route 10 accessible with the next order of buses (January 2024).

Commissioner Zurel inquired about the number of new applications that have been submitted since the contract for GoBus eligibility assessments was terminated. The General Manager responded that an exact number is not available at present, but the average has been approximately 25-30 per month.

2. Executive Summary Report

K. Breen noted the decrease in current service costs for pension plans and inquired if this is related to interest rates. The General Manager responded that since these are interim reports the exact details are not available, but it is likely.

Vice Chair Froude highlighted the uniqueness of Metrobus' ridership being above pre-pandemic levels. Based on recent conversations at the CUTA conference, this seems quite unusual compared to the experiences of some other transit properties in the country.

K. Breen, referring to the GoBus section of the report, specifically the statement "options being explored to continue the assessment process for new applications", inquired what exactly the options would be if assessments are out of the picture. Commissioner Ellsworth clarified that the intent of cancelling the assessments contract was to end re-assessment for remaining existing customers, but to continue assessments for new applicants through a third-party company.

3. Financial Statements for July 2022

Commissioner Zurel expressed appreciation of the financial analyses each month. She noted concern around the price of diesel and stressed the importance of continuing to be very cognizant of it.

VI. OTHER

1. Oliver Family Metrobus Award

The General Manager informed that the Oliver family has generously established an educational award in recognition of their bond with Metrobus after many years of service. Three of their family members – Charlie, Sr., Jim, and Danny – have worked with Metrobus for a combined 86 years. The Commission has written a letter of thanks to the Oliver family.

2. Next meeting – November 24, 2022

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Business concluded at approximately 12:54 PM.

MOTION: To adjourn the October 27, 2022 regular business meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission.

Moved by Commissioner Akerele. Meeting adjourned.