



## REGULAR BUSINESS

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

A meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission was held on Thursday, February 22, 2018 commencing Noon at the Metrobus Transit Centre, 25 Messenger Drive.

Present at the meeting:

Wally Collins	Chair/Councillor
Colleen Galgay-Johnston	Commissioner
Shawn Skinner	Commissioner
Dave Lane	Commissioner/City Councillor
Ian Froude	Commissioner/City Councillor
Kirsten Morry	Commissioner
Paul Walsh	Commissioner
Kevin Breen	City Manager
Derek Coffey	Deputy City Manager, Financial Management
Judy Powell	General Manager
Linda Ryan	Administrative Assistant

#### I. PROCEDURAL

- The Chair called the meeting to order. L. Ryan recorded the minutes of the meeting.
- The Chair welcomed Paul Walsh to the Commission.

#### II. AGENDA/MINUTES

- Commissioner Froude moved that the Minutes of the Regular Business Meeting of the Commission on January 25, 2018 be approved as distributed; Commissioner Galgay-Johnston seconded the motion.
- Commissioner Skinner moved that the agenda for this meeting date be approved as circulated; Commissioner Galgay-Johnston seconded the motion.

#### III. BUSINESS ARISING

##### 1. 30-Foot Vicinity Buses – Media Event

- Three (3) new low-floor, medium duty 30-foot Vicinity buses have arrived from Grand West Transportation. Commission Members were provided an opportunity to view one of the new compact buses prior to the start of the meeting.
- The new 30-foot buses will be introduced to the overall fleet within the next several weeks and utilized on several lower-demand routes within the transit system.
- The new units will replace three (3) 1998 40-foot transit buses soon to be retired from service.
- Once the new 30-foot buses are launched into service, all units in the fleet will have chassis of stainless steel construction.
- These vehicles were introduced to the market about four (4) years ago. They were first used in service in British Columbia. Last year, the stainless steel chassis became available. Our entire fleet has stainless steel bodies and the investment is paying off in terms of increased longevity.
- When the new units are about to be introduced into service, a media event will be held. Commissioners will be advised of the details when they become available.

## **2. Committees of the Commission - Appointments**

➤ Appointments were made to the Committees as noted below:

- Finance: D. Coffey will join existing members Chair Collins and Commissioner Skinner.
- Pension: D. Coffey and Commissioner Lane will join the General Manager and Manager of Human Resources as existing members.
- Accessibility: Commissioner Walsh, the General Manager and Manager of Accessible Transit Services will form this new Committee of the Commission.
- Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) Transit Board Members: Commissioner Froude will join Chair Collins as a member on this Board.

## **3. Appointment of Vice Chair**

➤ Commissioner Davis moved, Commissioner Froude seconded and it was unanimously carried that Commissioner Skinner be appointed as Vice Chair of the Commission.

# **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

## **1. Financial Statements**

The financial statements for January, 2018 were tabled and discussed. The following items were noted:

### **➤ Community Bus**

- We are awaiting notice from the province with respect to continuation of the Commission's grant under the province's Age-Friendly Newfoundland and Labrador (AFNL) Grant Program.
- The program enables Metrobus to operate the Community Bus service for seniors, an investment by the province benefitting older adults and people with mobility issues.
- In conversation with Henry Kielley, Acting Director, Aging and Seniors Division, Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, it is the General Manager's understanding that the decision by the province to continue its investment is currently held up at the Minister's level.
- Mr. Kielley inquired of the General Manager if the Community Bus service was sustainable beyond funding provided by the province and if the City of St. John's could support the Community Bus service in 2018. The General Manager informed Mr. Kielley that given the Commission's subsidy request relevant to its operating budget has already been submitted to the City for 2018, it would be a challenge in the current fiscal year.

Backgrounder:

The Age-Friendly Transportation Project assists in providing options for age-friendly transportation models. In June 2014 Metrobus began operating a fixed route, Community Bus Service aimed primarily at seniors. The purpose of the Community Bus Service is to provide transportation that is convenient, easy to use and helps people remain active in the community. Unlike other Metrobus routes, the Community Bus provides door-to-door pick-up and drop-off service at a number of apartment complexes and residences to major destinations, including shopping malls and recreation facilities. Service is provided by a 27-foot, fully-accessible bus that was purchased with a portion of the funding received from the province.

### **➤ Diesel Fuel**

- The cost of diesel fuel in January was \$1.1082 versus the budgeted price of \$1.04 and is being closely monitored.
- Fuel price volatility continues to pose challenges. Regardless of the fluctuation in diesel prices, Metrobus continues to be proactive in taking measures to reduce and conserve fuel usage and is cognizant of the impact on efficiencies.

### **➤ Ridership**

- A 2.8% increase in ridership was noted for the month of January over the same period in 2017.
- A fare increase effective January, 2017 resulted in an upsurge in December, 2016 pass sales that translated into decreased pass sales for January, 2017. The increase in January, 2018 ridership was somewhat predictable because of this factor alone.
- Additional influencing factors relevant to the increase include: less snowfall than last year and improved accessibility because of weather, a greater shift to m-card sales, and a 17.6% increase in 10-ride cards.

**1. Financial Statements** (continued)

- Commissioner Walsh expressed that the ridership graphs contained in the report didn't provide him any useful measures.
- The General Manager explained that the circumstance for the current summary is only for the first month of 2018. Comparable data will be available as the year progresses.

**2. Annual Review**

- Following the March or April business meeting of the Commission, managers will present an overview of activities for their respective departments during 2017.
- The presentation is informative in that it offers a larger perspective of the Metrobus operations and performance of the previous year, and demonstrates interaction between departments and their cohesiveness in achieving the organization's overall goals.
- The annual exercise is a useful tool for staff as an effective evaluation and planning tool.
- A Question-Answer session will follow the presentation.
- The review will be of particular benefit to new members of the Commission. All members were encouraged to attend and allot an extra hour in their calendars on this date for the review.

**V. OTHER** (Information/Community)

**1. Nomination – YWCA Women of Distinction Award**

- The Chair and Commissioner Galgay-Johnston, together with the General Manager, Human Resources Manager H. Hopkins, Operations Manager R. Lawlor and Transit Operator G. Churchill will attend the Women of Distinction Awards on March 8<sup>th</sup> at Clovelly in support of Linda Ryan who has been nominated by the Canadian Cancer Society for a 2018 YWCA Women of Distinction Award.
- L. Ryan thanked the Commission for their support of the initiative since its beginning. Metrobus has held an annual "Pink Days In Bloom Behind The Wheel" every year since 2012. The first tree of "The Pink Tree Project" was planted on the grounds of the new transit facility in 2013.
- Thirty-four (34) deserving nominees will be recognized at the YWCA's Women of Distinction Awards on International Women's Day.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

- There being no further regular business to discuss at this time, the meeting adjourned at approximately 12:45 PM followed by the In Camera Business Meeting.
- The next regular business meeting of the Commission will be held on Thursday, March 29, 2018 at Noon in the Board Room of the Metrobus Transit Centre.

Respectfully submitted,

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Wally Collins  
Chair

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Judy Powell  
General Manager