

MINUTES – JUNE 26, 2025

Meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission
Thursday, June 26, 2025 12:00 PM
In-Person at 25 Messenger Drive and online via WebEx

REGULAR

In attendance:

James Greey	Chair
Tolulope Akerele	Commissioner
Paul Canning	Commissioner
Josh Smee	Commissioner
Ron Ellsworth	Commissioner/City Councillor
Maggie Burton	Commissioner/City Councillor
Kevin Breen	City Manager
Derek Coffey	Deputy City Manager, Finance & Corporate Services
Judy Powell	General Manager
Donna Power	Administrative Assistant

Regrets:

Derrick Hutchens	Commissioner
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I. PROCEDURAL

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 pm.

II. AGENDA

MOTION: To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Burton; seconded by Commissioner Smee. Motion carried.

III. MINUTES

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the May 29, 2025 regular meeting as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Burton; seconded by Commissioner Smee. Motion carried.

IV. BUSINESS ARISING

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. 2025 Goals – Mid-Year Update

The General Manager provided a quick update on items included in this year's goals.

- Stop announcements system: Behind schedule due to hardware challenges. The contractor will be visiting to ensure the system works for each of the different bus styles we have. This visit will be scheduled for the end of July and the estimated launch time will move to mid-fall.
- Automatic reloads for m-Cards: On hold for now since new security requirements have come into play that will require further review.
- Depot upgrades for electrification: Stantec is working on the detailed design with hopes the RFP will be released mid- to late-fall.
- Smart card readers: As of last week, all card readers have been installed, and staff are now working to complete the software upgrades. Investigation is also underway to determine any appropriate fees for the new service features. A late-summer or early-fall launch is expected.
- Bus shelters: The first installation is expected to be complete by the end of this week. A total of six are planned for 2025.
- Service improvements for the fall schedule are on track to begin in September.
- Solar panels: Installation will be completed by the end of June. Additional installations may be possible pending the availability of supplies.
- New accounting software: The current software provider completed some upgrades that warranted review of this initiative; however, the upgrades did not meet our need so the project will proceed. Preparation has begun to draft an RFP with hopes for it to be released in six months. Staff will also consult with City staff to determine if there is any opportunity to collaborate.
- Hybrid buses: The remaining eight buses are scheduled to arrive by year-end. Buses are performing well so far and yielding about 30% fuel savings.
- Wheelchair accessible routes: Route 10 began operating as wheelchair accessible as of this Monday.

2. SUV for GoBus

In January 2025, the Commission approved the purchase of three vans for GoBus. Two have been purchased so far, but for the third, staff are interested in purchasing an SUV instead of a van. There are a number of customers who are unable to use taxi-vans and are designated as "car-only", and there are times (particularly evenings and weekends) when those taxis are not available to GoBus, which limits their ability to access the service. The Manager, Accessible Transit Services, is working to determine if an SUV would be feasible and help create more flexibility for them to book evening/weekend trips. If appropriate, management

may conduct an e-poll in the coming weeks seeking Commission's approval to purchase a SUV instead of a third minivan.

3. Reports

i. General Manager's Report

The General Manager noted a correction to the first item – Auction Results. The auction company was Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers, and not Fitzpatrick's.

ii. Executive Summary Report

The Commission inquired if any investigation has been done into 3D printing to overcome challenges in getting parts for the Vicinity buses. Staff noted that this may not be appropriate and there would be significant safety concerns with non-certified parts.

Ridership continues to perform lower than last year, though still higher than previous years. Ridership is also still high relative to summer service levels. Both these issues are cause for concern and require investigation to help inform future plans. Immigration trends and information about what other transit agencies are experiencing would both be helpful. The General Manager will reach out to some colleagues to learn about their experiences.

The Commission inquired about Metrobus' plans for the upcoming Canada Games. Staff have been in communication with organizers of the Games and have made clear that they cannot count on Metrobus to service everyone. They have made other arrangements for their athletes and volunteers. Metrobus does still expect to see a surge in ridership. Operators will be on standby with overtime and floater buses to move around as needed. Staff will also be putting together an information sheet to show which Metrobus routes to use to access the various sporting venues. The Transit Planner is also working on the detours required to accommodate the Games, which have just been finalized. The Commission suggested implementing more structured service in advance rather than responding as needed.

About half of the GoBus fleet are experiencing issues with lifts and this restricts those buses to transporting only ambulatory customers. A representative from Braun (lift manufacturer) will be here next week to help Tok's maintenance company become a Braun certified dealer.

iii. **Financial Statements for May 2025**

No discussion.

VI. **OTHER**

The next meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission will take place on July 31, 2025, at noon.

VII. **ADJOURNMENT**

Business concluded at approximately 12:17 PM.

MOTION: To adjourn the June 26, 2025, regular business meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission.

Moved by Commissioner Burton. Meeting adjourned.