



## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission  
Thursday, June 29, 2023 12:00 PM  
In-Person at 25 Messenger Drive

### In attendance:

Lynn Zurel	Chairperson
James Greey	Commissioner
Barry Fleming	Commissioner
Ron Ellsworth	Commissioner/City Councillor
Kevin Breen	City Manager
Derek Coffey	Deputy City Manager, Finance & Corporate Services
Judy Powell	General Manager
Donna Power	Administrative Assistant

### Regrets:

Tolulope Akerele	Commissioner
Ian Froude	Vice Chairperson/City Councillor
Maggie Burton	Commissioner/City Councillor

### I. PROCEDURAL

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:40 PM.

### II. AGENDA

**MOTION:** To approve the agenda as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Coffey; seconded by Commissioner Fleming. Motion Carried.

### III. MINUTES

**MOTION:** To approve the minutes of the May 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023 regular meeting as presented.

Moved by Commissioner Breen; seconded by Commissioner Ellsworth. Motion Carried.

#### IV. BUSINESS ARISING

Chair Zurel, noting another month of significant ridership growth, inquired about the ability to determine exactly where that increase is coming from – information that would be helpful in the development of Metrobus' growth plan. The General Manager responded that a customer survey may be a good approach, however resources to analyze and interpret the data are currently quite limited. Commissioner Breen suggested it may be beneficial to utilize an outside source to assist with this work. The General Manager will work with staff to explore the options further.

#### V. NEW BUSINESS

##### 1. Decision Note – Blind Square Software

A memo was circulated for the Commission's review. In summary, the Blind Square App (a wayfinding/GPS program) would complement an onboard stop announcements system by assisting riders to navigate to and from a bus stop and to get route information. The same technology is used at the Pedestrian Mall. Feedback (from users at the ped mall) indicated concern that the app was only available for iPhones, but we have since learned that an option is now available for Android devices. The project would cost approximately \$70,000 with an annual support cost of approximately \$16,000. Funding for the project has been approved through the ICIP program. Management is recommending approval of this purchase as described.

**MOTION:** To approve the purchase of the Blind Square app/software as recommended.

Moved by Commissioner Breen; seconded by Commissioner Ellsworth.

Discussion:

- The app would be configured to provide bus stop/route details, accessibility features, and information about surroundings. This would be done for every bus stop.
- The app is already in use at the Pedestrian Mall and at the Regatta. It makes sense to use the same technology for transit.
- The app is owned and supported by CNIB, who are very much invested in the software's success.

Motion carried unanimously.

## **2. General Manager's Report**

The General Manager's Report was tabled for the Commission's consideration.

Discussion:

- Challenges remain related to acquiring the necessary permits to install bus shelters. There is not a set process in place with the City's planning department; there is no specific contact person; and there is no clear understanding of the expectations from the Legal department. Staff are working together to find solutions and expedite the process.
- The Zero Emissions Report is presently being reviewed by Metrobus and City staff to ensure the information is accurate and clear before the final results are released, which is expected by the end of July.
- Results from the Accessibility Plan survey have been reviewed and presented to the Metrobus Accessibility Advisory Committee (MAAC), along with a "Where Are We Now" document. The next step is to identify what actions will be taken to address the gaps.

## **3. Executive Summary Report**

The Executive Summary Report was presented for the Commission's consideration.

Discussion:

- The significant increase in ridership is creating some instances where people are being denied boarding (due to the bus being full). In those situations, if the need is pressing, dispatch staff may opt to send a road supervisor to transport the passenger or call a taxi for them. The reduction in service hours, as part of the summer schedule, is concerning but is, so far, being managed.

## **4. Financial Statements for April 2023**

The Financial Statements for May 2023 were tabled for the Commission's consideration.

Discussion:

- It was noted that the way in which the ICIP funding is recorded as revenue is distorting the overall financial picture. It would be helpful to

adjust the report and separate the ICIP funding portion to create more clarity.

**VI. OTHER**

The next meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission will take place on July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at noon.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Business concluded at approximately 1:20 PM.

**MOTION:** To adjourn the June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023, regular business meeting of the St. John's Transportation Commission.

Moved by Commissioner Ellsworth. Meeting adjourned.