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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 6, 2022

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, April 6, 2022 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 1:30 PM. Electronic participation was permitted for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Barton, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Collier, Chair attended the meeting at 2:00 PM
Commissioner Anderson
Commissioner Carter
Commissioner Pickles
Commissioner Smith
Regional Chair Henry

Absent: Commissioner Drew
Commissioner Mulcahy was absent due to municipal business

Staff:

Present: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
W. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit
J. Austin, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, Durham Region Transit
L. Huinink, Director, Rapid Transportation & Transit Oriented Development, Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
J. Phelan, Planner, Service Design, Durham Region Transit
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
A. Naeem, Solicitor, Corporate Services – Legal Services
C. Norris, Deputy General Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit
N. Prasad, Assistant Secretary to Council, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
S. Samuel, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

In the absence of the Chair, Vice-Chair Barton chaired the meeting.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Smith,
(9) That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Executive
Committee meeting held on Wednesday, March 2, 2022, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. Delegations

There were no delegations to be heard.

5. Presentations

5.1 General Manager's Verbal Update

B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit provided a verbal update regarding On Demand Service; the reduction of the gas and fuel tax; and highlights from the spring Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA) conference.

B. Holmes stated that in September 2020 when the enhanced On Demand service was launched, planning staff highlighted the ridership monitoring framework to ensure services evolved to meet changing travel patterns and ridership demands. As a result of the recent increased demand in North Bowmanville, on April 4, 2022, the new Route 502 was launched.

B. Holmes also stated that On Demand recently experienced another record ridership week, delivering 3,700 trips, with 69 new riders who had not previously used On Demand services. He added that the median wait times remained at 10 minutes with a satisfaction rate of 97%. He also noted that scheduled service continues to be a key focus as 96% of DRT riders travel on this service.

With respect to the reduction in the Gas and Fuel Tax, B. Holmes advised that the Province announced it will be introducing legislation that would cut the gas tax by 5.7 cents per litre, and the fuel tax (which includes diesel) by 5.3 cents per litre for six months starting July 1, 2022. He also advised that the Region has yet to be formally informed, but it is understood that the Province has assured that the gas tax reduction will not impact the associated municipal transit funding. He will advise the Committee of any further updates.

B. Holmes also advised that earlier this week staff attended the Canadian Urban Transit Association's first in-person conference in two years. He provided an overview of the following common themes:

- Zero emission buses and transit fleet transition plans and associated funding;

- Micro transit and On Demand service enhancing service reliability and sustainability in rural, suburban, and low-density areas;
- Revenue pressures during ridership recovery period, and the ongoing need for operating funding into 2023 to maintain service quality;
- Staffing challenges to increase services as ridership returns and recruiting and training the number of staff needed to expand service levels;
- Supply chain challenges and the escalation of capital project costs, particularly for projects with approved funding that are experiencing escalations of up to 30%;
- Focus on public transit delivering value to the customers and the community, rather than just volume or level of ridership.

B. Holmes responded to questions regarding promoting the new 502 route in Bowmanville; its hours of operation; and, whether there are sufficient resources and interim measures to deal with the demand for On Demand services.

C. Norris responded to questions regarding the ways Regional Transit can best support the General Motors employees, in response to the company's announcement earlier this week that a third shift will be added with approximately 800 employees. He also responded to questions regarding the influx of new employees in the area near Wentworth Street that work the overnight and early morning shifts, and how Regional Transit can accommodate those employees that rely on the service.

Staff was asked to consider how public transit would be able to service the Northwood Business Park, where construction is scheduled to begin in the Spring/Summer months.

At the request of the Committee, J. Austin provided an update on the roll-out of the electric buses that are to be ordered; and the cost associated with the infrastructure required to implement an electric bus system.

B. Holmes responded to additional questions regarding the diesel fuel budget. He advised that information regarding the financial impact will be brought to the June meeting.

5.2 David Dunn, Manager, Rapid Transit Office re: BRT Shelter Update

Jack Phelan appeared before the Committee in place of David Dunn to provide a PowerPoint presentation regarding the BRT Shelter update. A copy of the presentation was provided to Committee members prior to the meeting.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Shelter Design Survey
- Why Shelter Design Option 2
- What Are We Missing?
- Moving Forward – Shelter Design
- Shelter Back Design Options
- Why Design Option 2
- Moving Forward – Back of Shelter

6. Correspondence

There were no correspondence items to be considered.

7. Reports

A) General Manager's Report – April 6, 2022 (2022-DRT-04)

Report #2022-DRT-04 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Carter, Seconded by Commissioner Pickles,
(10) That Report #2022-DRT-04 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

8. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There were no advisory committee resolutions to be considered.

9. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

10. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 4, 2022 at 1:30 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

12. Adjournment

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Pickles,
(11) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:03 PM

Respectfully submitted,

D. Barton, Vice-Chair

S. Samuel, Committee Clerk