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The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 11, 2023

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, January 11, 2023 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 1:30 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

Present: Commissioner Crawford, Chair
Commissioner Schummer, Vice-Chair*
Commissioner Anderson
Commissioner Brenner
Commissioner Carter*
Commissioner Garrod
Commissioner Roy
Regional Chair Henry
*denotes Commissioner's participating electronically

Also
Present: Commissioner Jubb*
Commissioner Kerr*

Absent: Commissioner Wotten

Present: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
W. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit
J. Austin, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, Durham Region Transit
A. Burgess, Deputy General Manager, Maintenance, Durham Region Transit
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
A. Naeem, Solicitor, Legal Services
C. Norris, Deputy General Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit
Z. Osime-Fakolade, Program Manager, Community Engagement and Change Management, Durham Region Transit
P. Singh, Project/Program Manager, Durham Region Transit
C. Bandel, Deputy Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
S. Ciani, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
L. Soto Maya, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Roy, Seconded by Commissioner Garrod,

(1) That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday, December 7, 2022, be adopted.

CARRIED

3. Presentations

3.1 Bill Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit Re: General Manager's Verbal Update

B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, provided a verbal update to the Committee.

B. Holmes highlighted Durham Region Transit's (DRT) work to advance transit service in Durham, highlighting the metrics in the General Manager's Report, and commitment to a culture of safety as demonstrated by the continued reduction in preventable collisions.

B. Holmes stated that DRT ridership on the scheduled network is continuing to recover from pre-pandemic levels, reaching weekly levels exceeding 80 per cent. He also indicated that the merged On Demand service data is 30 percent lower as a result of schedule service replacing On Demand in several urban zones, while ridership for specialized services has increased by 23 percent.

B. Holmes added that DRT continues to work with Metrolinx and Presto to advance fare payment options for customers such as the launch of the Presto contactless payment options this Spring.

B. Holmes announced DRT has reached an agreement with Nova Bus for the purchase of six twelve-metre battery electric buses with an expected delivery date for the end of 2024, as part of the e-bus pilot project.

B. Holmes advised that DRT continues to receive requests for an expansion of services across the Region and into neighbouring municipalities and noted that DRT has a solid base network to increase access to serve residents and enhance reliability over the coming years.

B. Holmes advised that the Transit Executive Committee will receive a report in February in advance of the March budget meeting outlining the recommended DRT long-term financial investment plan recommending a 10 year strategy beginning in 2023. The plan will significantly increase the annual revenue service hours which will improve the access, frequency and reliability of transit service in Durham Region.

B. Holmes and C. Norris responded to questions from the Committee regarding the new Seaton route in Pickering; accessible displays piloted at five bus terminals that provide real-time information on bus times; clarification for transit services provided in Bowmanville; reporting on ridership statistics; tracking of On-Demand service requests from customers; targeted messaging through social media to specific areas to advise of service changes; and a status of the opportunity for an additional Presto purchasing point of sale location in the Township of Brock.

The Regional Chair suggested that DRT staff work with the Corporate Communications team regarding targeted messaging on transit services to residents.

3.2 Bill Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit Re: Update on U-Pass and Durham Region Transit Service to Post-Secondary Campuses in Durham (2023-DRT-02)

B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, provided a presentation to the Committee regarding an Update on U-Pass and Durham Region Transit Service to Post-Secondary Campuses in Durham.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Clarifying recent comments/statements
- Service to post secondary campuses
- Resident access to campuses in 2023 compared to 2019
- U-Pass revenue and value
- U-Pass facts
- DRT fares and discounts/savings compared to standard fare
- 2022 Survey of Canadian agencies
- Staff response to recommendations from OTSU delegation, December 8, 2022
- Staff response to recommendations from OTSU delegation, December 8, 2022 (continued)
- Staff response to OTSU comments regarding January 2023 service changes

B. Holmes clarified inaccurate information contained in recent media reports and information presented by the Ontario Tech Student Union delegation at the December 7, 2022 Transit Executive Committee. He highlighted that compared to the pre-pandemic network serving the north Oshawa campus;

- routes have been rebranded, replaced, or merged;
- 50 per cent more Durham residents can access campus with a one-seat ride, no transfer;
- 90 per cent more Durham residents can access campus with a direct trip or one transfer; and
- there are 52 per cent more trips serving the campus.

B. Holmes also advised that comparatively to other transit systems, students have more access to transit services relative to the cost of the U-Pass in Durham Region.

B. Holmes stated that DRT values the U-Pass partnerships, and continues to enhance engagement with all Durham Region communities, including the post-secondary students and their respective student associations. He added that more residents can now access post-secondary campuses directly and DRT delivers more trips to post-secondary campuses than ever before.

Commissioner Brenner referenced a letter he received from the Ontario Tech Student Union on January 10, 2023, that identified a recommendation for DRT staff to work with the OTSU as well as Ontario Tech students to develop and provide an on-campus customer service survey of the students as a tool to garner direct feedback from this targeted audience. B. Holmes advised he would take this request under advisement.

4. Delegations

4.1 Adam Lamplugh, Durham Resident Re: Service Changes

Adam Lamplugh, Durham Resident, did not appear before the Committee.

5. Correspondence

There were no correspondence items to be considered.

6. Reports

6.1 General Manager's Report - January 2023 (2023-DRT-01)

Report #2023-DRT-01 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,

- (2) That Report #2023-DRT-01 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

6.2 Update on U-Pass and Durham Region Transit Service to Post-Secondary Campuses in Durham (2023-DRT-02)

Report #2023-DRT-02 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Roy,

- (3) That Report #2023-DRT-02 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

6.3 Durham Region Transit Advertising Policy (2023-DRT-03)

Report #2023-DRT-03 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Roy, Seconded by Commissioner Garrod,

- (4) That the revised Durham Region Transit Advertising Policy, as outlined in Attachment #1 to Report #2023-DRT-03 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be approved.

CARRIED

7. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There were no advisory committee resolutions to be considered.

8. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

9. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

10. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 1:30 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

11. Adjournment

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,
(5) That the meeting be adjourned.
CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:08 PM

Respectfully submitted,

M. Crawford, Chair

L. Soto Maya, Committee Clerk