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## **The Regional Municipality of Durham**

### **MINUTES**

#### **DURHAM REGION TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, April 7, 2021**

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, April 7, 2021 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 1:30 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

#### **1. Roll Call**

Present: Commissioner Collier, Chair  
Commissioner Barton, Vice-Chair  
Commissioner Anderson  
Commissioner Carter  
Commissioner Drew  
Commissioner Mulcahy  
Commissioner Pickles  
Commissioner Smith  
Regional Chair Henry  
**\* all members of Committee participated electronically**

Also

Present: Commissioner Crawford attended the meeting at 2:18 PM  
Commissioner Roy

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  
J. Demanuele, Director of Business Services, Works Department, attended the meeting at 1:53 PM  
S. Glover, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services  
L. Huinink, Director, Rapid Transportation & Transit Oriented Development, Office of the Chief Administration Officer  
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT  
A. McKinley, Deputy General Manager, Maintenance, Durham Region Transit  
A. Naeem, Solicitor, Corporate Services – Legal Services, attended the meeting at 1:42 PM  
C. Norris, Deputy General Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit

N. Taylor, Treasurer, Durham Region Transit, and Commissioner of Finance, attended the meeting at 1:35 PM  
C. Tennisco, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

**2. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**3. Adoption of Minutes**

Moved by Commissioner Smith, Seconded by Commissioner Carter,  
(10) That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday, February 3, 2021, be adopted.  
CARRIED

**4. Delegations**

There were no delegations to be heard.

**5. Presentations**

- 5.1 Jamie Austin, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, and Christopher Norris, Deputy General Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit, re: Transit Assistance Program and Secondary Student Transportation Incentives (2021-DRT-06 and 2021-DRT-07) [Item 7. A) and Item 7. B)]
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Jamie Austin and Christopher Norris provided a PowerPoint presentation on the Transit Assistance Program and Secondary Student Transportation Incentives. J. Austin advised that the presentation provides an update on the fare incentives for lower income residents and secondary schools students to help make public transit in Durham Region more affordable and increase ridership as part of DRT's recovery efforts from the COVID pandemic.

J. Austin provided an overview of the Transit Assistance Program (TAP) Pilot.

Highlights of his presentation included:

- Overview: TAP Pilot Evaluation
- TAP Background
- Evaluation Methodology
- Summary of Results
- TAP Customer Characteristics
- TAP Card Usage
- Overall Customer Experience with TAP
- What Customers Like About TAP
- What Customers Do Not Like About TAP
- Caseworkers Impressions of TAP

- Recommendations
- Comparing TAP and the Access Pass

J. Austin provided an overview of the recommendations to extend the TAP pilot through to March 2023; provide more choice for TAP customers such as Pay-as-you-go and Period Pass; to discontinue the paper Access Pass by the end of 2021; waive the PRESTO card fee for Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) clients shifting to TAP; develop a Communications strategy to build awareness and explain how the TAP functions; investigate direct payment options with Social Services and the Province; and, assess expansion potential to other groups living with low income.

C. Norris provided an overview of the Secondary Student Transportation Program and recommendations.

Highlights of his presentation included:

- Child and Youth Fares
  - Initiatives
- Market Opportunities
  - Secondary Students in Durham Region
- Recommendations
  - Fares

C. Norris provided an overview of the following recommendations that effective September 2021, the Y10 pass be discounted to \$63.50, from \$73.50; that a bulk pass purchase pilot be available to school boards in Durham Region and Durham Student Transportation Services with a minimum purchase of 570 monthly passes per month to qualify for a \$20 discount; and a report on the Y10 and Bulk Pass program be brought back to the Committee in June 2022 on the results of the pass programs.

The Committee requested clarification regarding the respondents surveyed, by municipality and no social service clients from the Township of Brock responded to the survey. J. Austin advised that DRT is looking at extending the program to provide an opportunity for staff to engage directly with the clients in the areas that had little or no responses.

Discussion ensued regarding whether the opportunity exists to assess the potential expansion of the TAP for residents who are economically challenged and not receiving the ODSP or OW support; and, with respect to opportunities within the existing transit systems on administering a low income support model.

Staff responded to questions regarding the operational and capital costs investments for the Secondary Student Transportation Programs; whether the secondary students currently within the 3.2 kilometres are taking transit or walking

to the school; and, whether further funding would be required to manage the additional Y10 monthly secondary students.

At the request of the Committee, C. Norris provided clarification on how the Y10 pass program saves students \$20.00 per month when they purchase a Youth pass every month between September to June; how it incentivizes youth to travel using public transit; and, the opportunities to generate \$2 million in additional annual fare revenue. Discussion ensued on the allocation of the Provincial Gas Tax funding.

Staff responded to additional questions regarding whether staff is looking at a Youth pass for the pre COVID-19 route in the Village of Brooklin to accommodate the high school students that have to walk up to 4 kilometres to get to the high school. C. Norris advised staff is looking at the design of the Route 302 service and will be part of the discussions in the upcoming PIC.

## **6. Correspondence**

- A) Correspondence from Town of Ajax, re: Resolution passed at their Council meeting held on February 22, 2021, regarding the Durham-Scarborough BRT in Pickering Village
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Chair Collier expressed concerns regarding the issues raised by the Town of Ajax outlined in their correspondence. He advised that similar issues have also been raised by the communities within the Region's municipalities.

Chair Collier noted that the Town of Ajax is requesting that Metrolinx work with staff to preserve the historical and heritage of the Pickering Village areas.

B. Holmes advised that Metrolinx and DRT staff are working closely with the local area municipalities to address their concerns.

Moved by Commissioner Carter, Seconded by Commissioner Mulcahy,  
(11) That the correspondence from Alexander Harras, Manager of Legislative Services/Deputy Clerk, Town of Ajax, re: the Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit in Pickering Village be referred to staff for a report on the municipality's request at the June 9, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting.

CARRIED

- B) Correspondence from City of Oshawa, re: Resolution passed at their Council meeting held on February 22, 2021, regarding Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit Project Public Information Centre 3
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Commissioner Carter spoke to the requests raised by the City of Oshawa as outlined in their correspondence.

Moved by Commissioner Carter, Seconded by Commissioner Mulcahy,  
(12) That the correspondence received from Mary Medeiros, City Clerk, City of Oshawa, re: the Durham-Scarborough Bus Rapid Transit Project Public Information Centre 3, be referred to staff for a report on the municipality's requests at the June 9, 2021 Committee of the Whole meeting.

CARRIED

## 7. Reports

### A) General Manager's Report – April 7, 2021 (2021-DRT-05)

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Report #2021-DRT-05 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Staff responded to questions regarding whether an alternative provider for Island Taxi has been found. B. Holmes confirmed that a third-party service provider was successful to a recent tender and is providing supplementary On Demand services in Scugog, Uxbridge and Brock, and that DRT Specialized Services have reallocated resources to ensure residents will not experience a reduction in services.

Moved by Commissioner Drew, Seconded by Commissioner Pickles,  
(13) That Report #2021-DRT-05 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

### B) Transit Assistance Program pilot evaluation (2021-DRT-06)

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Report #2021-DRT-06 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Mulcahy, Seconded by Commissioner Carter,  
(14) A) That the General Manager, Durham Region Transit be directed to undertake the following with respect to continuing and expanding the Transit Assistance Program (TAP) providing low cost transit access to eligible Durham residents:

- i) The TAP pilot be extended an additional 24 months to allow time for further assessment of customer preference for the existing pay-as-you-go versus a proposed period pass PRESTO option as transit ridership recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic;
- ii) The Access Pass currently available to Ontario Disability Support Program clients as a monthly paper period pass, be transferred to the PRESTO electronic fare payment card (and electronic ticketing if feasible) by Fall 2021 as the TAP Period

Pass at an estimated cost of up to \$23,000 in 2021 dependent on ridership levels to be funded from within DRT's approved 2021 budget that eligibility for the TAP Period Pass be expanded to include Ontario Works clients, and that the paper Access Pass be discontinued;

- iii) The initial PRESTO card acquisition fee be waived for Ontario Disability Support Program clients during 2021 to assist with the transition from the paper Access Pass to TAP, at an estimated cost of \$15,000 to be funded from within DRT's approved 2021 budget for ridership incentive initiatives;
- iv) Durham Region Transit work with Durham Social Services, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services and Metrolinx on a communications strategy to build awareness about TAP among social assistance clients and staff and educate about program features and requirements;
- v) Durham Region Transit continue to work with Metrolinx and the Region's Social Services and Finance departments to introduce direct payment options from social service agencies for transit fare products on behalf of eligible clients; and
- vi) Durham Region Transit continue to work with the Region's Social Services and Finance departments to review and report back as part of the annual business planning and budget process on the results of the pilot and recommended actions, including potential extension to other vulnerable Durham residents.

CARRIED

C) Secondary student transportation (2021-DRT-07)

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Report #2021-DRT-07 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Chair Collier spoke to efficiency of the Y10 fare incentive; and, the opportunities to increase DRT's volume of the model share using existing DRT fixed resources and to attract youth to travel on transit.

Chair Collier referred to Table 2, on page 6 of the Report, outlining the number of monthly passes required to break even for the various additional discounts to the Y10 monthly pass. He suggested that the Y10 cost be lowered by \$20.00 for a reduced pass cost of \$53.50.

Discussion ensued regarding the whether DRT could accommodate the lost revenue and the additional volume of passes to break even. B. Holmes noted that a report will be forthcoming on the impact of zero cost transit in terms of service frequency and value.

B. Holmes also responded to a question regarding the service plans for students in the Municipality of Clarington.

Moved by Commissioner Barton, Seconded by Commissioner Drew,

- (15) A) That effective September 1, 2021, the Y10 pass be discounted by a further \$10.00 per month, from \$73.50 to \$63.50, providing youth with a monthly pass cost \$30.00 lower than the regular Youth pass (\$93.50 per month), with revenue impacts anticipated to be offset through increased sales volumes;
- B) That a pilot bulk Youth pass purchase program be established for the 2021/2022 school year, with the program to be available to school boards within the Region of Durham including Durham Student Transportation Services, and the bulk purchase rate for Youth passes to be discounted by \$20.00 per month, from \$93.50 to \$73.50, when collectively at least 570 monthly passes are purchased for a given month; and
- C) That staff report back to Transit Executive Committee in June 2022 summarizing the results of the Y10 pass program and the pilot bulk Youth pass purchase program.

CARRIED AS AMENDED  
(See Following Motion)

Moved by Commissioner Barton, Seconded by Commissioner Mulcahy,

- (16) That the main motion (15) of Commissioners Barton and Drew be amended in Part A) by deleting the amount of "\$10.00" and replacing it with the amount of "\$20.00"; by deleting the amount of "\$63.50" and replacing it with the amount of "\$53.50"; and, by deleting the amount of "\$30.00" and replacing it with the amount of "\$40.00" in order to further increase the Y10 pass discounts.

CARRIED

Part A) of the recommendation now reads as follows:

- A) That effective September 1, 2021, the Y10 pass be discounted by a further **\$20.00** per month, from \$73.50 to **\$53.50**, providing youth with a monthly pass cost **\$40.00** lower than the regular Youth pass (\$93.50 per month), with revenue impacts anticipated to be offset through increased sales volumes.

The main motion (15) of Commissioners Barton and Drew was then put to a vote and CARRIED AS AMENDED.

D) Paper Transfers (2021-DRT-08)

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Report #2021-DRT-08 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Anderson, Seconded by Commissioner Pickles,

- (17) A) That staff review and report back to TEC in December 2021 summarizing Durham Region Transit's (DRT) current fare payment processes, including direct and indirect costs of electronic, cash and ticket fares, including barriers and recommended solutions for considering a fully electronic fare payment process;
- B) That paper transfers be reintroduced on a trial basis starting May 3, 2021, and that should there be a change in employee COVID-19 cases, DRT stop issuing paper transfers for cash and ticket fares; and
- C) That during the trial period and effective June 1, 2021, DRT no longer issue free PRESTO cards, unless approved otherwise, and should DRT cease issuing paper transfers, PRESTO cards be issued at no cost to a customer if \$6.50 is loaded when purchasing the card at a Durham Region Transit point of sale location.

CARRIED

E) On Demand outcomes and next steps (2021-DRT-09)

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Report #2021-DRT-09 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

B. Holmes responded to questions regarding whether staff had received any complaints regarding the reliability of the On Demand services in the Township of Brock; the framework for the On Demand services in the rural and urban zones to ensure that transit services are available in the low demand areas; the potential for scheduled services to replace On Demand; keeping public transit as a viable mode of travelling; and opportunities for staff to utilize the DRT fleet and assets to accommodate the low demand areas.

Moved by Commissioner Smith, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,

- (18) That Report #2021-DRT-09 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

**8. Advisory Committee Resolutions**

**8.1 Durham Region Transit Advisory Committee**

There were no Advisory Committee items to be considered.

**9. Confidential Matters**

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

**10. Other Business**

**10.1 Ontario Power Generation Donation for Free Transit to the COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics**

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Chair Collier provided an update on the Ontario Power Generation (OPG) \$10,000 donation in support of the vaccine rollout. The Chair advised that seniors and residents of Durham Region will be able to ride Durham Region Transit's On Demand or Specialized Service free to and from a local vaccine clinic. The temporary free service is funded by a \$10,000 donation from Ontario Power Generation (OPG) in support of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout.

B. Holmes responded to a question on how the DRT will administer the free transit services.

Moved by Commissioner Anderson, Seconded by Commissioner Smith,

(19) That the Rules of Procedure be suspended in order to introduce a motion regarding the Ontario Power Generation donation to waive the fare for customers who use DRT services to travel to and from a vaccination clinic within Durham Region.

CARRIED ON THE FOLLOWING RECORDED  
VOTE (A 2/3rds vote was attained)

Yes

No

Commissioner Anderson  
Commissioner Barton  
Commissioner Carter  
Commissioner Drew  
Commissioner Mulcahy  
Commissioner Pickles  
Commissioner Smith  
Commissioner Collier, Chair  
Regional Chair Henry

Members Absent: None

Declarations of Interest: None

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Barton,  
(20) That, in recognition of the generosity of Ontario Power Generation to provide a \$10,000 donation to Durham Region Transit for the purpose of providing free transportation for seniors to travel to vaccination clinics, the General Manager and Treasurer of Durham Region Transit be authorized to implement the required operational processes to use the donation to waive the fare for customers who use DRT services to travel to and from a vaccination clinic in the Region of Durham, for the purpose of receiving their COVID-19 vaccination, up to a maximum of \$10,000.

CARRIED

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 at 1:30 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

**12. Adjournment**

Moved by Commissioner Pickles, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,  
(21) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:38 PM

Respectfully submitted,

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S. Collier, Chair

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C. Tennisco, Committee Clerk