

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, December 8, 2021 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 1:30 PM

1. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Collier, Chair, left the meeting at 3:15 PM
Commissioner Barton, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Anderson
Commissioner Carter
Commissioner Drew
Commissioner Mulcahy
Commissioner Pickles
Commissioner Smith
Regional Chair Henry

Also
Present: Commissioner Crawford

Staff
Present: C. Bandel, Deputy Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer
W. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit
J. Austin, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, Durham Region Transit
M. Binetti, Transportation Service Design, Durham Region Transit,
L. Huinink, Director, Rapid Transportation & Transit Oriented Development, Office of the Chief Administration Officer
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
N Ratti, Transit Manager, Policy and Planning, Durham Region Transit
R. Walton, Regional Clerk/Director of Legislative Services, Corporate Services – Legislative Services

2. Declarations of Interest

Commissioner Collier made a declaration of interest under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act with respect to Item 7. B) Report #2021-DRT-30: U-Pass Agreement Extension. He indicated that his son attends Ontario Tech University and pays for a U-Pass.

Commissioner Mulcahy made a declaration of interest under the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act with respect to Item 7. B) Report #2021-DRT-30: U-Pass Agreement Extension. She indicated that she has a child that attends Durham College.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Pickles,
(54) That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting held on Wednesday, November 3, 2021, be adopted.
CARRIED

4. Delegations

A) Morgan Ste. Marie and Declan Amaral, Durham Catholic District School Board, re: Student Bus Passes

Morgan Ste. Marie, Chair and Declan Amaral, Student Trustee, Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB), provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Student Bus Passes. A copy of the presentation was provided to Committee members prior to the meeting.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Transportation Recommendation between Durham Catholic District School Board (DCDSB) and Durham Region Transit
- Benefits of Transit Use for Students
- Background
- Rate Comparison
- DCDSB Recommendation
- Community Partners
- Investing in the Future of Public Transportation
- Equitable Access to Education
- Promotion of Public Transportation
- Student Testimonials
- Public Transportation: Today, and Tomorrow
- Summary of Benefits
- Environmental Stewardship

M. Ste. Marie outlined the following benefits of transit use for students:

- promotes social equity by providing secondary students with access to public transit
- improves quality of life for students through increased access, opportunity, choice and freedom
- reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, improves air quality and reduces traffic congestion throughout the region and near school locations
- introducing secondary students to transit promotes life-long use of public transportation

M. Ste. Marie advised that the DCDSB Regional Arts & Media Program (AMP) draws students from across Durham Region and is the only program that offers public transit passes to eligible students. He advised that the DCDSB is currently purchasing \$93.50 transit passes for eligible students. He requested that DRT provide at least the same rate offered to youth with the Y10 pass or the same rate that post secondary students receive. He also stated that they have an immediate need to purchase 350 monthly passes at the posted discounted rate of \$53.50 for the students attending the program in Whitby and would commit to a five-year term if possible. He advised that the DCDSB would love to partner with DRT to promote the value of transit services to all high school students.

M. Ste. Marie requested that DRT provide equitable access rates to students attending the Arts and Media Program at All Saints Catholic Secondary School in Whitby.

D. Amaral stated that it's important for AMP students to have equitable access to education. He stated that an overwhelming number of students who have been given bus passes have expressed that they are more likely to use public transit now and in the future because of the bus pass. He stated that investing now in the future of public transit use increases awareness of the bus routes available; reminds students and families of the benefits of public transportation; creates a sense of loyalty and trust in transit among students and parents; and increases the number of regular transit users.

M. Ste. Marie, D. Amaral and DCDSB staff responded to questions of the Committee.

B) Carolyn Morton, Chair, Durham District School Board, re: Student Transportation

Carolyn Morton, Chair, Durham District School Board provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to Student Transportation. A copy of the presentation was provided to Committee members prior to the meeting.

Also in attendance was David Wright, Associate Director of Corporate Services; Christine Thatcher, Vice-Chair of the Board; Kayla Malcolm, Student Trustee; James Kay, Student Trustee; and Demario Knowles, Student Trustee.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Supporting Student and Public Transit in Durham Region
- Background and Current Context
- Fares
- Positive Impacts of Public Transit Use
- Benefits of Partnership
- Current Durham District School Board (DDSB) Usage of Durham Region Transit (DRT)
- Recommendation
- Why DRT Instead of School Buses

C. Morton stated that there is a province wide shortage of school bus drivers which is having an ongoing impact on student transportation. She advised that she would like to propose solutions to support students getting to school and to express a willingness to work in partnership with DRT. She advised that in previous conversations with DRT, a rate of \$73.50 per month for a student bus pass was offered if purchased in bulk, which is \$20 higher than the Y10 youth pass. The current price is \$93.50 because they are not purchased in bulk.

C. Morton stated that the following are positive impacts of public transit use: creating life-long public transit riders; better for the environment; reduces gridlock; supports student independence; and, bus passes can be used outside of school hours. She also stated that there are several benefits of partnership and proposed that DRT work collaboratively with Durham Student Transportation Services and the Durham District School Board to provide specialized service for students eligible for transportation as an alternative to running school buses where possible, and that the cost per student be between \$36.13 to \$53.50 per month based on the number of students accessing Durham Region Transit.

C. Morton and DDSB staff responded to questions of the Committee

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Smith,
(55) That the delegations from the Durham Catholic District School Board and the Durham District School Board be referred to staff for further discussion.

CARRIED

- C) Michael Measure, Executive Cofounder, Birdsafe Building Consultant, FLAP Canada, re: bird collisions with windows at transit stations and shelters

Michael Measure, Executive Cofounder, Birdsafe Building Consultant, FLAP Canada, provided his delegation later in the meeting. (See Item 4. C) on page 8)

5. Presentations

There were no presentations to be heard.

6. Correspondence

- A) Email correspondence from Rosemary McConkey, Oshawa City Councillor Ward 1, re: Bus stop on the North/East corner of Conlin Road and Ritson Road, Oshawa

Moved by Commissioner Carter, Seconded by Commissioner Drew,
(56) That the correspondence from Rosemary McConkey, Oshawa City Councillor, Ward 1, regarding bus stop on the North/East corner of Conlin Road and Ritson Road, Oshawa, be referred to staff.

CARRIED

- B) Email correspondence from Christine Frechette, Oshawa resident re: Bus stops on Conlin Road east of Ritson Road to Townline Road, Oshawa

Moved by Commissioner Carter, Seconded by Commissioner Drew,
(57) That the correspondence from Christine Frechette, Oshawa resident, regarding bus stops on Conlin Road east of Ritson Road to Townline Road, Oshawa, be referred to staff.

CARRIED

- C) Email correspondence from Les Gondor re: Bus Stops on Conlin Road East

Moved by Commissioner Barton, Seconded by Commissioner Drew,
(58) That the correspondence from Les Gondor regarding bus stops on Conlin Road East, be referred to staff.

CARRIED

- D) Email correspondence from Glorianne Atkins re: Safety Issues on Conlin Road East

Moved by Commissioner Barton, Seconded by Commissioner Drew,
(59) That the correspondence from Glorianne Atkins regarding safety issues on Conlin Road on Conlin Road East, be referred to staff.

CARRIED

7. Reports

A) General Manager's Report – December 8, 2021 (2021-DRT-29)

Report #2021-DRT-29 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Pickles, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,
(60) That Report #2021-DRT-29 from the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

At this point in the meeting, Chair Collier left the Chair and Vice-Chair Barton assumed the Chair due to Commissioner Collier's stated declaration of interest.

B) U-Pass Agreement Extension (2021-DRT-30)

Report #2021-DRT-30 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Drew, Seconded by Commissioner Smith,
(61) That the existing U-Pass agreement with Durham College, Ontario Tech University and Trent University (Durham Campus) be extended through the 2022-2023 academic year, including a 1.9 per cent increase in the fee per eligible student from \$144.50 per semester to \$147.25 per semester for the period of September 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023 conditional upon Finance and Administration Committee Approval.

CARRIED

This matter will be considered by the Finance and Administration Committee on December 14, 2021 and presented to Regional Council on December 22, 2021. [Note: subsequent to the meeting due to livestreaming issues the Finance and Administration Committee meeting was rescheduled to December 15, 2021]

At this point in the meeting, Chair Collier resumed the position of Chair.

C) Follow up to zero fare transit report (2021-DRT-31)

Report #2021-DRT-31 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Staff responded to questions with regards to the duration of the temporary three-month fare suspension; the Phase 3 Restart funding; whether DRT was able to use any funding from the province for the lost fare revenues; if staff can inquire whether the Safe Restart funding can be continued; whether DRT would have to withdraw from the PRESTO fare system if they chose to not collect fares for three months; and the impact on gas tax revenue. Staff was requested to look into the benefit of doing a three-month pilot.

Moved by Commissioner Mulcahy, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,
(62) That Report #2021-DRT-31 from the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

D) Ridership growth through accelerated investment in revenue service
(2021-DRT-32)

Report #2021-DRT-32 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Barton, Seconded by Commissioner Mulcahy,
(63) That Report #2021-DRT-32 from the General Manager, Durham Region Transit, be received for information.

CARRIED

8. Advisory Committee Resolutions

8.1 Durham Region Transit Advisory Committee Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Anderson, Seconded by Commissioner Drew,
(64) That the minutes of the regular Transit Advisory Committee held on November 16, 2021 be received for information.

CARRIED

9. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters.

10. Other Business

10.1 Garbage Containers at the Pickering Parkway Terminal

Commissioner Pickles raised concerns with regards to the garbage containers along the Pickering Parkway Terminal near the GO Station bridge. He advised that the garbage containers get filled up very quickly and inquired what is being done to address the situation.

At this point in the meeting, Chair Collier left the meeting on municipal business and Commissioner Barton assumed the position of Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Also at this point in the meeting, the delegation from Michael Measure was heard.

4. Delegations

C) Michael Measure, Executive Cofounder, Birdsafe Building Consultant, FLAP Canada, re: bird collisions with windows at transit stations and shelters

Michael Measure, Executive Cofounder, Birdsafe Building Consultant, FLAP Canada, provided a PowerPoint presentation with regards to bird collisions with windows at transit stations and shelters.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- Bird-Building Collisions
- Bus Shelters are no Exception
- Bus Shelter Features
- Bird-Friendly Guidelines & Standards
- Transit Stations, Platforms & Bus Shelters
- Examples of Bus Shelters
- Durham Region Bus Shelter Retrofits
- Current Standards

M. Measure stated that the issue of bird collisions is the leading cause of death of birds across Canada. He stated that Durham Region has initiated efforts to try and mitigate this concern by applying bird prey decals to the bus shelters but this technique is outdated and does little to reduce bird striking the glass. He further advised that a variety of municipalities across Ontario now have mandatory requirements that meet the Canadian Standards Association's Bird-Friendly Building Design Standard. This Standard lays out the various steps necessary to alleviate the concerns of birds colliding with windows and he recommended that DRT look closely at this Standard with regards to transit facilities.

M. Measure responded to questions of the Committee.

10. Other Business

10.2 DRT Year-End Video

B. Holmes advised that staff has worked with Corporate Communications to put together a year-end video, intended to highlight some of DRT's accomplishments as well as thank customers, partners and employees and played the video for the committee.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 12, 2021 at 1:30 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

12. Adjournment

Moved by Commissioner Mulcahy, Seconded by Commissioner Smith,
(65) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 3:29 PM

Respectfully submitted,

S. Collier, Chair

N. Prasad, Assistant Secretary to Council