

November 30, 2020

This letter was written on the unceded, unsundered territories of the Lekwungen and WSÁNEĆ peoples.

To the members of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission (the Commission),

The University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) and Camosun College Students' Society (CCSS) have a long-established record of advocating for improved transit at all levels of government. Together, the UVSS and the CCSS represent the largest ridership stakeholder group in Greater Victoria and the funding provided by the UVSS and CCSS U-Pass program constitutes a significant portion of public funding for transit in the Greater Victoria region. In 2017, the Commission approved a motion to request that the Minister of Transport and Infrastructure amend the British Columbia Transit Act to add a rotating voting seat on the Commission for the UVSS and the CCSS (see attached motion). This request was denied from the former Minister of Transport and Infrastructure.

As there is a new Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, there is an opportunity for obtaining substantive representation for this large stakeholder group. In order to achieve this, both the UVSS and the CCSS hope to have your support in lobbying the province to amend the British Columbia Transit Act to add a voting student seat on the Commission once more. We look forward to discussing this opportunity soon, and working together to ensure appropriate representation on the VRTC.

Sincerely and in solidarity,



university of victoria
students' society



bcfs17



CASA | ACAE
Canadian Association of
Community and Applied
Education

Motion to request that the non-voting student seat on the Transit Commission be made into a voting student seat

Whereas the University of Victoria Students' Society (UVSS) and the Camosun College Students' Society (CCSS) together represent the largest ridership stakeholder group in Greater Victoria; and,

Whereas UVSS and CCSS members live in every area serviced by the Victoria Regional Transit Commission; and,

Whereas the UVSS and CCSS U-Pass funding represents a major portion of existing funding for transit in Greater Victoria; and

Whereas the UVSS and CCSS have a vested interest in improving transit for all riders in all areas of the region and are already actively engaged in advocating at all levels of governance for transit in Victoria; therefore,

Be it resolved that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission support that the non-voting student seat be made into a voting student seat; and

Be it further resolved that the Chair of the Victoria Regional Transit Commission send a letter to the Minister of Transportation, Claire Trevena, requesting an amendment to the British Columbia Transit Act to add a voting student seat on the Commission.

**Victoria Regional Transit Commission
Minutes of the Meeting
Held at BC Transit
520 Gorge Road East
Tuesday, December 12, 2017
9:00 AM**

PRESENT: Councillor Susan Brice, Chair
Mayor Richard Atwell
Mayor Barbara Desjardins
Mayor Carol Hamilton
Mayor Lisa Helps
Mayor Maja Tait
Anmol Swaich, Student Representative, UVSS
Councillor Geoff Young

REGRETS: Mayor Alice Finall

BC TRANSIT STAFF: Manuel Achadinha, President & Chief Executive Officer
Brian Anderson, Vice President Operations & Chief Operating Officer
Aaron Lamb, Vice President Asset Management
Alan Thomas, Vice President Finance & Chief Financial Officer
Ryan Dennis, Supervisor, Sales and Revenue Development
Dave Guthrie, General Manager Victoria Operations
Megan Hill, Director, Budgeting and Forecasting
James Wadsworth, Planning Manager
Jonathon Dyck, Communications Manager
Cara Weirmier, Executive Assistant (*Recorder*)

OPEN SESSION

1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 9:01AM by Chair Susan Brice.

Moved by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the agenda as presented

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – September 19, 2017

Moved by Mayor Hamilton and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the minutes as presented

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

None

4. CHAIR'S REMARKS

Chair is pleased to report that the meeting with the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure went very well. Extensions of the bus priority lanes and the Commission's request for an increase in the dedicated gas tax were confirmed as the top priorities.

Looking ahead, there are exciting enhancements and announcements for the region:

- a) An electric bus will be coming to Victoria as part of a pilot project to learn more about the emerging technology;
- b) A full driver door is now fitted into three buses in the region and surveys are live for Transit Operators and public feedback;
- c) Enhanced service is being implemented with the Tsawout First Nation; and
- d) The Santa Bus will be making its rounds this upcoming weekend

5. DELEGATIONS

- a) Camosun College – Shane Busby represented Camosun College with a request for more service
- b) Raegan Elford – requested that the BC Transit fiscal year be changed to August 1 to July 31
- c) Better Transit Alliance – Eric Doherty reported that the Alliance is happy to see that BC Transit is moving forward on extending the bus lanes and infrastructure in the downtown core, but would like to see BC Transit continue to pressure the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to complete the portions on highway land
- d) Bus Riders’ Union – (represented by Larry Wartels) would like to see money from ICBC used to fund transit and infrastructure initiatives

6. 2017/18 FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE REPORT – for APPROVAL

Megan Hill

Passenger revenue is trending \$0.97 million above budget and is forecast to be \$1.45 million above budget at year end. Fuel is trending \$2.1 million below budget year-to-date and is forecast to be \$2.8 million below budget at year end. Operating expenses (excluding fuel) are forecast to be \$1.9 million below budget at year end. The forecasted impact on the Transit Fund is an increase of \$1.9M over budget to \$4.6 million at year end.

The Operating Reserve Fund (which can only be used to offset inflationary impacts of existing service) is forecasted to be at \$13.2M by year end.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Atwell to APPROVE the report as presented

CARRIED

7. 2017/18 DRAFT BUDGET – for INFORMATION

Megan Hill

Every December, BC Transit is required to submit operating and capital projections to the Province and at that time, BC Transit provides the Commission with a draft budget for review and information. The draft budget summarized the anticipated cost and revenues associated with base service levels. A decision on the Commission’s fuel tax request is expected when the provincial budget is tabled in February 2018. At the February 27, 2018 Commission meeting, the final 2018/19 budget will be presented for approval, incorporating any approved expansion hours and the revenue impact of the fuel tax, or change in the funding formula, if applicable.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

8. 2018/19 ANNUAL SERVICE PLAN – for APPROVAL

James Wadsworth

At the June 20, 2017 meeting, the Commission approved the implementation of an additional 10,000 hours of expanded conventional transit service for implementation in September 2018, subject to the Commission receiving additional provincial funding through either an increase to the dedicated fuel tax, or re-alignment of the provincial cost-sharing formula.

The Annual Service Plan forecasts allocation of service hours by time of year and route type. It also identifies service change dates and describes significant changes and expansions to service to be implemented for 2018/19 (April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019). Key transit service improvements include cost-neutral changes to the local bus network in the Westshore to reflect road network improvements, and increased service levels on the Saanich Peninsula local bus network.

Subject to funding, the additional 10,000 service hours would be allocated to a new crosstown route that would provide service between the University of Victoria and the Interurban Camosun College Campus via Hillside Ave and Gorge Rd, to continue to improve service levels on Hillside and Gorge and accommodate growth in Interurban Campus population.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait to APPROVE the report as presented

CARRIED

9. DOUGLAS STREET BUS LANES BUDGET AMENDMENT – for APPROVAL

Aaron Lamb

In November, The City of Victoria (the “City”) issued the revised tender for Phase 2B of the bus lanes. The tender closed on November 30, 2017 with five bids received. The preferred proponent’s total bid price is \$365,000 less than the lowest bid received in the previous tender and \$840,000 below the design engineer’s price estimate. Construction could commence in early 2018, with substantial completion expected by October 31, 2018.

The bus lanes represent a priority investment in the region and the increase can be funded from the Transit Fund. A budget increase of \$2.2 million was requested, bringing the total budget for this phase of work to \$4.30M.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the requested budget increase for the Douglas Street Bus Lanes project

CARRIED

10. 2018 REFUGEE PASS PROGRAM - for APPROVAL

Ryan Dennis

The program to date has been well received and appreciated by the refugee community. The recommendation was made to continue the program for another year.

Motion by Mayor Tait and seconded by Mayor Helps to APPROVE the continuation of the Refugee Pass Program for another year

CARRIED

11. EcoPASS PROGRAM – for APPROVAL

Ryan Dennis

BC Transit distributed the proposed Program to the planning departments of all of the municipalities in the Capital Regional District for feedback. The Program is generally accepted as a viable transit-oriented solution that is suitable as part of a larger suite of transportation demand management (TDM) measures. BC Transit will continue to engage with regional planning departments and will promote the Program as a component of comprehensive TDM measures used in parking variance requests.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Hamilton to APPROVE the EcoPASS Program

CARRIED

12. SERVICE UPDATE – for INFORMATION

David Guthrie

A general update on service performance and customer feedback was presented. Of note, staff have been out in the James Bay community talking to residents about the service changes to be implemented in January 2018.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins to RECEIVE the update for information

CARRIED

13. TRANSIT FUTURE PLAN and RAPID TRANSIT BUSINESS CASE – for INFORMATION

James Wadsworth

An summary of business planning activities, including the development of a comprehensive business case was presented. Subsequent to the business case, BC Transit has worked with local municipalities, the Capital Regional District and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to align transit investment in the region, including the phased implementation of bus priority lanes along Douglas/Highway 1.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait to RECEIVE the report for information

CARRIED

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins, that the Commission allocate funding from the Transit Fund to update the business case, cost projections and implementation plan for Bus Rapid Transit Corridor between the Westshore and downtown (as presented on the Rapid Transit Alignment Map, pages 14 and 22 of the presentation in Item #13)

CARRIED

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to identify to the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure the importance of preserving the E&N corridor to support overall transportation movements in the region

CARRIED

14. PLANNING UPDATE – for INFORMATION

James Wadsworth

A general update on service planning and community engagement activities was presented.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

15. INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE – for INFORMATION

Aaron Lamb

A general update on infrastructure planning and construction activities in support of transit services was presented. Of note, 34 new bus shelters have been approved for the Victoria region with installations to be completed by March 31, 2018.

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Hamilton to RECEIVE the report as presented

CARRIED

16. ATAC MINUTES – for INFORMATION

Dave Guthrie

Motion by Mayor Desjardins and seconded by Mayor Helps to RECEIVE the minutes as distributed

CARRIED

17. CORRESPONDENCE

None

18. MOTIONS WITH NOTICE

- a) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to build on the electric bus pilot project and to prepare a business case and implementation plan for the transition of the Victoria Transit Commission fleet to electric by 2030.

It was clarified at the meeting that asset investment decisions are the responsibility of the BC Transit Board of Directors and the results of the electric bus pilot project will inform future investment strategies.

Amended motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins that the Victoria Regional Transit Commission indicate to the BC Transit Board of Directors that the Victoria Region would like to be the pilot community in British Columbia for the transition to electric vehicles

CARRIED

- b) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to work with the University of Victoria Students' Society and the Camosun Students' Society to develop a summer semester Transit Pass to be administered by the student societies.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Tait with the amendment that all students be included in the program

CARRIED

- c) Mayor Helps - Direct staff to develop a “Park and Ride bus pass subsidy” that will encourage parking providers to create more park and ride spaces in a way that allows industry to at least break even.

Motion by Mayor Helps and seconded by Mayor Desjardins with direction to staff to prepare a report

CARRIED

- d) Mayor Atwell - Request that the non-voting student seat on the Transit Commission be made into a voting student seat

Whereas the University of Victoria Students’ Society (UVSS) and the Camosun College Students’ Society (CCSS) together represent the largest ridership stakeholder group in Greater Victoria; and,

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Motion by Mayor Atwell and seconded by Mayor Helps to have a letter written on behalf of the Commission to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure to request the student representative be made a full voting position on the Victoria Regional Transit Commission

CARRIED

19. COMMISSION AGENDA DEVELOPMENT – for DISCUSSION

Chair Brice

Going forward, any items members would like added to the meeting agenda will need to be submitted two weeks’ prior in order to give staff time to prepare.

20. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Mayor Helps seconded by Mayor Tait to ADJOURN

CARRIED

Adjourned 12:52

Next meeting scheduled for February 27, 2018 at 9:00 a.m.