

<p>Victoria Regional Transit Commission Minutes of the Meeting Held at BC Transit 520 Gorge Road East Tuesday, December 4, 2012 9:00 am</p>

PRESENT:	Councillor Susan Brice, Chair	
	Mayor Dean Fortin	
	Mayor Carol Hamilton	
	Councillor Marianne Alto	
	Mayor Barbara Desjardins	
REGRETS:	Mayor Frank Leonard	
	Mayor Larry Cross	
BC TRANSIT STAFF:	Manuel Achadinha, President & CEO Mike Davis, VP & COO Michael Kohl, VP & CFO Erinn Pinkerton, Director of Corporate & Strategic Planning Gerald Chang, Manager, Sales & Revenue James Wadsworth, Senior Planner Dave Guthrie, General Manager, Victoria Operations Meribeth Burton, Corporate Spokesperson Linda Moss, <i>Recorder</i>	

OPEN SESSION

1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Chair, Susan Brice. The Chair noted that the Commission will be going In Camera after agenda item #12.

Councillor Alto requested that discussion of the Vicinity bus be added to the Open Session portion of the meeting under Business Arising or New Business since it was introduced into the public domain several weeks earlier.

The Chair stated that this could be discussed under Business Arising portion of the agenda.

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ALTO AND MAYOR DESJARDINS that the agenda be approved as circulated with the addition of decision of Vicinity bus discussion under Business Arising portion of the agenda.

CARRIED

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOVED BY MAYOR HAMILTON AND MAYOR DESJARDINS that the minutes of November 15th meeting be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Councillor Alto stated that in the previous meeting she had requested to hear from operators regarding the Vicinity bus but item was set aside due to job action. However, due to the public media event of the Vicinity bus there is no merit to delay discussion any further or have it In Camera.

MOTION BY COUNCILLOR ALTO AND SECONDED BY MAYOR FORTIN that the use of the Vicinity buses on a trial basis added to the Open Session of the Agenda.

AGAINST: Chair Brice, Mayor Desjardins & Mayor Hamilton

MOTION DEFEATED

4. CHAIR'S REMARKS

The Chair thanked both the Union and the Management for maintaining a high level of service during this very difficult time for our customers.

5. DELEGATIONS

Camosun College – Peter Lockie, BP Administration and Kathryn Le Gros, Director Administration stated that Camosun College and BC Transit have a positive working relationship and they have a common goal to increase transit ridership and decrease single occupancy vehicles. Camosun has two campuses which are moving towards equal number of students at each. While all students are equally paying for UPass, the service to both campuses is not equal. While understanding of resource constraints was expressed it was requested that the Commission give serious consideration to improving service to both campuses both in short term planning and in strategic planning for the future.

David Langley - Mr. Langley, a former CRD planner raised questions with respect to the details of the Three Year Service and Financial Strategy Report completed for the LRT project and provided a brief presentation related to this.

The Chair thanked Mr. Langley for his input.

Discussion followed about the Local Funding Task Report and it was noted that if this report is being discussed at CRD, the Commission should have it as well. A request was made to have the report made available to the Commission.

6. FINANCIAL & PERFORMANCE REPORT

Staff presented a summary of the Financial and Performance results for the 7 months ended October 31, 2012. Significant items noted were:

- Both passenger revenue and ridership are forecast to be marginally higher than budget for the year and fuel tax revenues are forecast to be 3% higher than budget.
- Operating expenditures are forecast to be 1% favourable to budget. This is primarily a result of fuel savings to date from lower prices and budget savings from the fixed price fuel agreements in place.
- Lease fees are projected to be favourable by 4% as a result of the timing of the replacement of the custom vehicles.

- Conventional and custom performance statistics have been included in this report with both continuing to benchmark favourably against Canadian peer transit systems.
- Three year base budget expenditure projections have also been included. Staff will present a final budget for Commission approval once the fare strategy and service plan expansion options have been approved. Preliminary tax assessments will also be available for the next Commission meeting

The Commission accepted this report FOR INFORMATION.

CARRIED

7. FARE STRATEGY APPROVAL

Staff reported that the public consultation efforts during this fare strategy campaign garnered 1207 survey responses, 97 emails, 34 phone messages and 3 mail-in submissions, far surpassing the 600 responses received three years ago.

For reference, the four fare options are described below:

- **Option 1** - Includes an increase to cash fares (\$2.75 for adult, \$2.00 for seniors/youth), a decrease to the cost of day passes and no change to adult monthly passes.
- **Option 2** - Includes an increase to adult cash fares (\$3.00 adult, \$2.00 for seniors/youth) and monthly passes with a decrease to the cost of day passes. This option introduces a whole-dollar denominated cash fare that is more user-friendly and is expected to result in fewer fare disputes.
- **Option 3** - Introduces a single cash fare (\$2.50 for both adults and seniors/youth). While the cash discount offered to seniors and youth is removed, the discount offered on tickets remain and monthly passes are reduced by a higher amount. The single cash fare offers a simplified fare structure and provides an incentive for riders to switch to pre-paid products. A single cash fare structure is common in a number of transit systems throughout Canada.
- **Option 4** - Introduces the single cash fare concept (\$3.00 for both adults and seniors/youth) and maintains the adult monthly pass rate while decreasing the rate for senior/youth passes.

A set of decision criteria and objectives were developed with the goal of providing a sound basis of assessing and understanding the key advantages and disadvantages of all four fare options.

The fare strategy objectives are as follows:

- Provides a balance between user contributions (fare revenue) and public funding (property taxes);
- Promotes ridership retention and long term growth;
- Has adequate or strong public support; and
- Provides increased operational efficiencies and simplifies fares for customers and drivers.

MOVED BY MAYOR FORTIN AND COUNCILLOR ALTO that the Commission accepts Option 3 with modification of Youth/Senior Monthly Pass rate to \$45.00.

UNANIMOUS

CARRIED

8. SERVICE REVIEW – PRELIMINARY REPORT

Staff presented a project update which included:

- preliminary analysis of route performance which identifies some cost neutral “quick wins” to add to the 2013/14 service plan
- highlights some of the challenges and opportunities that exist in transit system moving forward
- weekend route performance and weekday major route performance by time of day
- transit coverage at the present time and service requests to expanding areas not receiving any coverage at this time
- UVic campus coverage (campus plan on next meeting agenda)
- On-street transit facilities
- Transit priority linkage
- Next steps for the project

Staff reported that preliminary analysis shows that service is well utilized at peak times. Most of the major routes meet or exceed performance guidelines during peak travel times and midday and most of the major routes meet performance guidelines during the evening.

Discussion included the issue of pass ups. It was noted that pass ups should be looked at in terms of service available on routes where pass ups are occurring (i.e. pass up that has to wait 4 minutes for next bus is not the same as a pass up that has to wait 40 minutes for next bus).

The Commission accepted this report FOR INFORMATION.

CARRIED

9. SERVICE EXPANSION OPTIONS FOR BUDGET DEVELOPMENT

Staff presented the following three service expansion options for service expansion to guide budget and program development:

- **Service Expansion Option 1:** Minimum service levels required to remain aligned with population growth (Approximate 1.0% increase)
- **Service Expansion Option 2:** Service levels to meet population growth plus a strategic portion of additional hours to improve transit service. (Approximate 2.0% increase)
- **Service Expansion Option 3:** Service levels needed to remain on target to implement the Transit Future Plan Strategy and meet the approved mode share and ridership targets. (Approximate 2.7% increase).

These options were developed to address both conventional and custom service needs and are based on the Transit Future Plan Strategy as well as the results to date of the Victoria Service Review. Expansion proposed for the first year (2013/14) of 5,000 hours for fixed routes with an additional 2,250 hours of increased handyDART service is the same in all options and is constrained by the fleet purchase approved in June 2012. A three year budget and taxation requirements was included for each option.

MOVED BY MAYOR FORTIN AND SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR ALTO to endorse the following option with the added request that staff bring this endorsement forward to the CRD for consultation:

Service Expansion Option 3: Service levels needed to remain on target to implement the Transit Future Plan Strategy and meet the approved mode share and ridership targets (Approximate 2.7% increase).

UNANIMOUS

CARRIED

10. FORD WORLD CURLING VOLUNTEER FARE PARTNERSHIP

At the December 4, 2012 Commission meeting the Ford World Men's Curling Championship organizing committee (the Organization) requested the Commission approve free transit service to their 515 event volunteers.

Staff noted that the Commission approved the following policy on requests for free fares at the February 15, 2011 meeting:

Policy

1. It is the policy of the Commission that there are no free fares for special groups or events
2. Exception to the policy may occasionally be granted by the Commission through an exemption request

Along with the positive economic impacts an event of this size and prominence will bring to Victoria, there will also be increased traffic and parking congestion. Volunteers using free transit passes will mitigate these issues and may provide an additional incentive for some community members to trial local transit services. In-kind advertising from the Organization would offset printing cost of special 'magswipe' transit passes which will capture data for special events usage.

MOVED BY MAYOR FORTIN AND SECONDED BY MAYOR DESJARDINS to approve the Organization's request for free travel for their volunteers based on the criteria that is a World Championship event expecting to draw over 100,000 attendees, with worldwide media coverage and that BC Transit is recognized on event material for volunteers.

CARRIED

11. PLANNING UPDATE

Staff presented an update of planning activities in the following areas:

Service Update

- Winter Service (Jan-Apr)
- Special events and construction projects

Upcoming special events

- **Langford Christmas Fire Truck Parade** – Detours and possibly additional service to maintain scheduled service

Construction projects

- **Leigh Rd Interchange** – Completion date is summer to fall 2013 and will require permanent bus route changes
- **Victoria Blue Bridge replacement** – exact construction dates unknown at this time
- **Craigflower Bridge replacement** – postponed to next year, exact date to be determined
- **BC Hydro Duct Bank Project** – BC Hydro has a project that will commence this Spring 2013 which requires trenching and will impact traffic on Douglas, Saanich, Oak and Blanshard
- **McKenzie/Finnerty Intersection** – Saanich will be constructing a roundabout at the McKenzie/Finnerty Intersection. The project will begin in the Spring of 2013. The project will impact transit operations during construction but once constructed will reduce delays to transit at the intersection

Planning Initiatives

- **Service Review**
- **Transit Priority Studies**
- **Operations & Maintenance Facilities Master Plan**
- **UVIC Campus Transit Plan**

Infrastructure Projects

- **BC Transit Shelter Program**

The Commission accepted this report FOR INFORMATION.

CARRIED

12. CORRESPONDENCE

Staff presented correspondence received:

- a. Sidney Industrial Group (SIG) – request for more service

MOVED BY COUNCILLOR ALTO AND SECONDED BY MAYOR DESJARDINS to receive correspondence as circulated.

CARRIED

13. ADJOURNMENT OF PUBLIC PORTION OF THE MEETING - 11:01 am IN CAMERA SESSION HELD