

# Victoria Regional Transit Commission

BC Transit 520 Gorge Road East and WebEx  
November 9, 2021 | 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

## DRAFT MINUTES

*The Victoria Regional Transit Commission conducts its business on the homelands of the Songhees and Esquimalt First Nations.*

### **Present:**

Susan Brice, Chair, Mayor Fred Haynes, Mayor Geoff Orr, Mayor Kevin Murdoch, Mayor Maja Tait, Mayor Rob Martin, Mayor Lisa Helps, Councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe

### **BC Transit Staff:**

Christy Ridout, Vice-President, Business Development, Kevin Schubert, General Manager, Victoria Regional Transit; Levi Timmermans, Director, Infrastructure Management; Lisa Mullins, Senior Manager, Government Relations; Matthew Boyd, Director, Corporate and Strategic Planning, Megan Hill, Director, Budgeting and Forecasting; Kevin Schubert, General Manager, Victoria Regional Transit System, Levi Megenbir, Senior Transit Planner, Jenn Carragher, Senior Regional Financial Manager, James Wadsworth, Manager, Project Development, Kyle Bowman, Manager, Sales and Revenue, Christine Lewis, Executive Assistant (Recorder)

### **Regrets:**

Robin Pollard, Student Representative

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### **1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Chair Susan Brice called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m.

**Motion MOVED by Councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe and SECONDED by Mayor Lisa Helps the agenda as written.**

**CARRIED**

### **2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM AUGUST 10, 2021**

**Motion MOVED by Councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe and SECONDED Mayor Geoff Orr to approve the minutes as written.**

**CARRIED**

### **3. CHAIR'S REMARKS**

Good Morning,

Since our August meeting it was good to see students returning to in class learning at our post secondary institutions and folks starting to get back to seeing each other in person! There is certainly more folks back on the road and more folks back on transit!

On October 5, The Province announced a mandatory proof of vaccination policy for public service employees, and in alignment with the Province, BC Transit has also moved forward for the requirement for all employees including contractors to be fully vaccinated by November 29<sup>th</sup>. Many other communities have also endorsed this plan to continue to do everything we can to prevent the spread of Covid-19 and to keep our communities safe!

Certainly a lot has happened since we last met and today's meeting staff are providing much needed updates on items for information to prepare for budget approvals in February.

It should also be noted that BC Transit is currently asking for public feedback on the Westshore local area transit plan including feedback on Rapidbus from the Westshore to Downtown Victoria. The online survey is up and running on the BC Transit website until November 17<sup>th</sup>.

**4. CORRESPONDENCE**

None

**5. NOTICE OF MOTION**

None

**6. FINANCIAL AND PERFORMANCE SUMMARY Q2 YTC – FOR INFORMATION  
MEGAN HILL**

- Despite the pandemic and current recovery phase, revenue continues to grow. Price of fuel and labour shortages continue to be a concern.
- Consideration of bus location and travel distance from the bus yard as a way to mitigate fuel costs. Scheduling looking to optimize service and reduce costs with every schedule change developed. Future facility locations will help in the long term.
- Ridership moving in the right direction but continue to monitor.
- Funding will be set for this fiscal and will update commission at next meeting. Ridership captured from part way through summer to September through data and customer satisfaction survey – 80% in favour and having a positive impact in community. Slight bump seen in ridership with youth. No fare product currently to capture specific data but can use automatic counters around schools for data.

(Motion deferred to end of meeting)

**7. 2021/22 SERVICE UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION  
LISA MULLINS**

- Ridership recovering with in person learning and workers returning to the office at 65% pre-Covid levels.
- Like other sectors labour shortage is impacting service. Focus is on providing reliable service. Increased retention and recruitment strategy underway. Mandatory vaccine policy now in place effective November 29 for all BC Transit employees. Following provincial lead on mandatory vaccinations. Employees who are not vaccinated after Nov 29 will be put on unpaid leave for three months.
- Wages for transit operators – competitive work environment and wages are determined under collective agreement. Continue to look at closely as we go into negotiations in the new year.
- Recommend expansion be delayed with the exception of Beecher Bay.
- Communication will ensure the service we are scheduling is reliable and customers can depend on it. This is a temporary measure and we hope to see movement on labour challenges in the new year.
- **Motion MOVED by Mayor Lisa Helps and SECONDED by Mayor Rob Martin to RECEIVE 2021/22 Service Update for information.**

**CARRIED**

**8. DRAFT 2022/23 BASE BUDGET – FOR INFORMATION  
MEGAN HILL**

- Forecast for the next 3 years, including ridership level scenarios and options for consideration. Assumption in forecasting is that workplaces will return to pre-pandemic commuter level but still unknown what will actually happen as some workers continue to work hybrid or remote.
- Expansion of service 20,000 hours deferred planned in 22/23 and 23/24.
- Restart funding from provincial government will decrease next year. Commission will draft a letter to the provincial government thanking for support of transit through restart funding and state support for continued restart funding.
- Impact to revenue with move to electronic fare system in the future. Expect it will encourage ridership in addition to initiatives like RapidBus in the region.

**Motion MOVED by Mayor Lisa Helps and SECONDED by Mayor Kevin Murdoch for the Chair to a send a letter on behalf of the Commission to the provincial government in support of continued restart funding for transit and to RECEIVE the Draft 2022/23 Base Budget for information.**

**CARRIED**

**9. RAPIDBUS, PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE REPORT – FOR INFORMATION**  
*LEVI MEGENBIR, JAMES WADSWORTH*

- Westshore public engagement underway and includes an external working group with all municipalities located in the Westshore transit plan area.
- Sooke transit hub identified in local area plan and included as part of the 10 year vision document. BC Transit to follow-up with Sooke staff.

(Motion deferred to end of meeting)

**10. MAJOR FACILITIES REPORT – FOR INFORMATION**  
*JAMES WADSWORTH*

- Update on planning and current studies being done by the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure in the region including the Uptown Mobility Hub.

(Motion deferred to end of meeting)

**11. OPERATIONS UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION**  
*KEVIN SCHUBERT*

- Recognition of hard work being done by staff to keep transit on time and running smoothly as we move through the pandemic and focus on ridership recovery. Data is enabling planning and scheduling to improve run times and better connections for transit users.
- Operators deal with uncomfortable situations and see more mental health scenarios. Transit supervisors working with operators and monitoring regularly.

(Motion deferred to end of meeting)

**12. ATAC MINUTES – FOR INFORMATION**

*KEVIN SCHUBERT*

ATAC minutes from the September 10, 2021 ATAC meeting were provided.

(Motion deferred to end of meeting)

**13. 10 YEAR VISION – FOR INFORMATION**

*LEVI MEGENBIR*

- Revisit the vision on a yearly basis. Key changes including updating COVID recovery plan, system performance statistics, key performance indicators with set targets including access to transit and Gant chart showing current and future projects planned or scheduled.

**Motion MOVED by Mayor Lisa Helps and SECONDED by Mayor Maja Tait to RECEIVE all agenda times for information.**

**CARRIED**

**14. STUDENT UPDATE – FOR INFORMATION**

*ROBIN POLLARD*

A written update was submitted by Robin Pollard who was unable to attend in person. BC Transit staff will be responding.

**The Student Update was received for information.**

**1. IN CAMERA**

The Commission received a report on Victoria handyDART.

**Motion by Mayor Tait and seconded by Mayor Murdoch to adjourn in camera meeting at 11:45 a.m.**

**CARRIED**

**NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

Tuesday, February 22, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.