

**THE THIRD MEETING OF THE TRANSIT COMMITTEE
OF THE CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY**

**C-12, Main Floor
Tom Davies Square**

**Monday, November 5, 2007
Commencement: 12:00 p.m.**

Chair

COUNCILLOR TED CALLAGHAN, IN THE CHAIR

Councillors

Councillors Berthiaume; Dupuis

Staff

D. Nadorozny, General Manager of Growth & Development; R. Sauve, Director of Transit Services; D. Martel, Mechanical Foreperson; R. Gauthier, Supervisor of Transit; G. Lamothe, Manager of Communications & French Language Services; A. Taylor, Communications Officer; A. Haché, City Clerk; T. North, Deputy City Clerk; Franca Bortolussi, Council Secretary

Declarations of
Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

Item 2
Update of Past
Initiatives

Fare Boxes: Mr. Sauve advised that the fare boxes were installed at the end of May and early June. He indicated that this was not a smooth transition and a number of mechanical difficulties were encountered. He mentioned that the GPS is not communicating with the fare box system, making it difficult to receive passenger counts per stop. They have been in contact with the fare box provider to get these issues resolved. Once the mechanical problems are resolved, they will begin to see the benefits as ridership reports will be more accurate with the new fare box system. If this issue is not resolved, Transit staff will be looking for another service provider.

Mr. Nadorozny advised that as a new city initiative they have been providing transit passes to conference attendees in the City of Greater Sudbury. They will be looking at providing this service when the City is hosting conferences and events. These passes are not considered to be part of the fare structure.

Radar Base Transcab: Mr. Sauve advised that they have been providing the Transcab service to the Radar Base since the beginning of August. He stated that there is not a large uptake. Only six households in the Radar Base have been using the service.

Item 2
Update of Past
Initiatives
(continued)

U-Pass: Mr. Sauve advised that students from Laurentian University have experienced problems when using their U-Pass as the university has not provided Transit Services with an updated student list. Doug Nadorozny provided historical background on negotiations which had taken place with the Laurentian University Student Associations pointing out that the student associations voted and agreed to a U-Pass cost of \$200. At the last moment, when the agreement was to be signed, a \$135 U-Pass was agreed upon based on Laurentian University's calculations and 6,500 students. It was always intended that the U-Pass be revenue neutral. When the first payment was received in January, there were no details provided on the number of students. Following the final reconciliation it was determined there were 5,500 students. KPMG worked on the numbers and determined cash fares was a variable as they are difficult to estimate. There is a shortfall of revenue in 2007 which Financial Services has advised should be taken out of the 2007 surplus. They will continue financial analysis and decide what a more appropriate fee should be for the U-Pass. The Transit Committee will be consulted prior to the upcoming negotiations with the Laurentian Students Associations in January or February 2008.

Item 3
Review of New
Initiatives

Extra Hours: Mr. Sauve advised that in response to the request of having extended bus hours to accommodate the contact centres and hospital employees, there will be new early inbound and late outbound times. Buses will now be arriving at the Transit Terminal at 7:15 a.m. and will leave the Terminal at 12:30 a.m. These new times will be applicable Monday to Sunday. A joint committee was created comprised of management and union members. The new proposals will need to be brought to the membership and voted on. The goal is to start this service by February 2008. The Transcab service will be able to meet the 12:30 a.m. deadline. The Transit Committee noted that information relating to the impact of the new service on area rating be brought forward for discussion at the next meeting.

Valley Service: Mr. Sauve advised that the transit staff met with Valley residents and the Valley East CAN who stated that they wanted service to everywhere in the Valley (intra service) and increased service to the downtown Transit Terminal. Mr. Gauthier explained the different route options for the Valley intra service. The Committee agreed that the intra service route not include the Radar Base and that it not travel th Valley View Road not received intra-community service. The Transit Committee requested that the roll out of the new service (extra hours and Valley Service) be done individually and not simultaneously.

Item 3
Review of New
Initiatives
(continued)

Handi Transit: Mr. Sauve advised that the Handi Transit continues to grow. Mr. Gauthier advised that due to the increase of ridership, a third Handi Transit bus has been added which is used in the Valley and in downtown core. Mr. Sauve advised the Handi-Transit budget is approximately \$170,000 to \$180,000 over spent. He suggested a marketing campaign advising Handi Transit users of the advantages of the conventional Transit system such as not having to book 48 hours in advance. Many buses have accessibility features, and some are completely accessible. This could remove pressure from the Handi Transit Service.

Councillor Dupuis suggested that a letter be sent to regular users of Handi-Transit advising them of the advantages of using the conventional bus system.

Shuttle Bus: Mr. Martel advised that an RFP has been issued for a new shuttle bus, closing on November 15, 2007. A time schedule will be established once the shuttle bus arrive. There was a slight difference in the anticipated original price as they have decided to purchase a diesel bus.

Bus Purchase: Mr. Martel advised that they have purchased four conventional type buses and one suburban type. They will arrive by the middle of April.

Bike Racks: Mr. Martel advised that two of the conventional buses being purchased will have bike racks. Transit will meet with the Bicycle Advisory Panel to select the appropriate routes for these buses.

Marketing: Ms. Taylor outlined the marketing and communications update to the Committee. She advised that a number of priority tactics have been identified. They are as include: the new rider guide (2008); a movie theatre pre-show shown in the Sudbury Silver City Theatres; exterior bus signage on the rear or side of the bus using the "I Ride" campaign concept; bilingual bus decals shaped in speech balloons applied to the side windows of the buses, "I Ride" artwork billboards placed on major commuter routes throughout Greater Sudbury; radio advertising with promotional messages using the "I Ride" campaign; television closed captioning 10 second spots to promote the new extended hours offered by Greater Sudbury Transit; flyer to all Valley East Residents to provide the details of the new intra-community transit route; print ads regarding new Valley East route to provide the details of the new intra-community transit route and print ads regarding extended transit service hours to promote the new extended hours offered by Greater Sudbury Transit. The goal of the strategy is to educate residents, increase ridership and increase awareness of the benefits of using Transit.

Item 4
Budget Overview

Mr. Sauve advised for the 2007 budget that there is a net budget variance of \$300,000. This has resulted from the new services (U-Pass, Seniors Program and Transcab Program). He believes that 95 % of that amount is attributed to the U-Pass and stated that they should be back on track for 2008. He advised that a budget option is required as there is a need for a full time inspector as many operators are relieving in that capacity. There is no cost to this option as it has already been approved. There is a need for clarification as the previous report did not specify the position was full time.

Mr. Nadorozny advised that user fees for bus fares have not increased for the last 4 years. He stated that they had been experiencing ridership growth and that when there is an increase in fees there is usually a decrease in ridership. The decision to increase rider fees will be discussed at a future meeting.

Item 5
New Requirements

Mr. Sauve advised that Mr. Gauthier will be attending a conference on November 9, 2007 on Accessibility. He spoke of possible new legislative requirements for bus drivers to announce every bus stop. He would like to have the GPS working with the fare box to give an automated message before every stop. He states that Transit has discussed this issue with the GPS provider, and it remains unresolved at this time. He advised that due to safety concerns, he does not want the drivers to have to announce each stop. The Committee noted that the Transit have until December 10, 2007 to present their position on this requirement.

The Chair advised the Committee of Councillor Landry-Altman's request of having an Express bus route or a bus only lane on Notre-Dame.

Councillor Dupuis informed the Committee that there is a group of Seniors in Azilda that are requesting a charter bus to bring them to the Howard Armstrong Recreational Centre for their swimming practice 3 times a week for an hour. The seniors will pay \$3 per person, Councillors Dupuis and Dutrisac have agreed to pay the remainder of the cost. Councillor Berthiaume indicated that there might be residents in his ward that would be interested in participating and he would be willing to also subsidize some of the cost.

Mr. Sauve advised that David Courtemanche has requested that the Transit bus make a detour behind the Pioneer Manor because the Family Health Team is in that location and he is concerned about the residents walking to the bus stop located on Notre Dame. The Committee questioned if the road would withstand the weight of the bus. Transit staff will explore this idea further and discuss this matter at a future meeting.

Item 5
New Requirements
(continued)

The Committee noted that two requests for services were received, one for Handi-Transit for the Radar Base and the other for regular service in Estaire. The Committee agreed to provide Handi-Transit to the Radar Base and noted Estaire is not included in the City's boundaries.

Councillor Berthiaume advised that the Levack-Onaping CAN requested buses instead of Transcab service for Onaping and Levack.

Item 6
Next Meeting

The next meeting be in January at the call of the Chair.

Adjournment

2007-6 Dupuis-Berthiaume: THAT this meeting does now adjourn.
Time: 2:00 p.m.

CARRIED

Councillor Ted Callaghan, Chair

Angie Haché, City Clerk