

If this information is required in an accessible format, please contact 1-800-372-1102 ext. 2097.

The Regional Municipality of Durham

MINUTES

DURHAM REGION TRANSIT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 8, 2023

A regular meeting of the Durham Region Transit Executive Committee was held on Wednesday, March 8, 2023 in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby, Ontario at 1:30 PM. Electronic participation was offered for this meeting.

1. Roll Call

Present: Commissioner Crawford, Chair
Commissioner Schummer, Vice-Chair*
Commissioner Anderson attended the meeting at 1:32 PM
Commissioner Brenner
Commissioner Carter*
Commissioner Garrod
Commissioner Roy
Commissioner Wotten
Regional Chair Henry
***denotes Commissioners participating electronically**

Also

Present: Commissioner Jubb*
Commissioner Kerr*

Staff

Present: E. Baxter-Trahair, Chief Administrative Officer*
W. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit
R. Adamsz, Deputy General Manager of Maintenance, Durham Region Transit
J. Austin, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, Durham Region Transit
R. Inacio, Systems Support Specialist, Corporate Services – IT
A. Mak, Supervisor, Financials, Durham Region Transit
A. Naeem, Solicitor, Legal Services*
C. Norris, Deputy General Manager, Operations, Durham Region Transit
Z. Osime-Fakolade, Program Manager, Community Engagement and Change Management, Durham Region Transit
N. Pincombe, Director, Business Planning and Budgeting, Finance Department
N. Taylor, Treasurer, Durham Region Transit, and Commissioner of Finance
S. Ciani, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
L. Soto Maya, Committee Clerk, Corporate Services – Legislative Services
***denotes staff participating electronically**

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Moved by Commissioner Garrod, Seconded by Commissioner Brenner,
(10) That the minutes of the regular Durham Region Transit Executive
Committee meeting held on Wednesday, February 8, 2023, be adopted.

CARRIED

4. Presentations

4.1 Bill Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit Re: General Manager's
Verbal Update

B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, provided a verbal update to the Committee.

B. Holmes recognized the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women on International Women's day, highlighting the talented women working at Durham Region Transit that bring fresh insights and ingenuity to their roles. B. Holmes acknowledged that while DRT has made progress towards gender equity, there is still more work to do to eliminate barriers to success for all women.

B. Holmes highlighted Durham Region Transit's collaboration with Regional departments that benefit the community, such as the Operations division and the Primary Care Outreach Program (PCOP) to support individuals at risk; and a partnership with Paramedic Services to support a mobile clinic in the community.

B. Holmes discussed the capacity challenges with On-Demand services due to resource limitation, the impact on customers, and ways that DRT is addressing the issue. He stated that the amalgamated On Demand service provides service equity in that all eligible residents can now access the service.

B. Holmes also discussed the reliability and frequency of scheduled service, and actions taken in January improved service reliability for customers.

B. Holmes stated that the 2023 Durham Region Transit Business Plans and Budget will be considered later in the meeting. He noted that at their last meeting, Council adopted the Transit Service and Financing Strategy (2023-2032) which identified that annual service hours will increase to \$1.2 million in 2032. He also noted that in 2023 DRT will work to ensure service capacity advances to meet the post-pandemic travel needs of residents and customers.

B. Holmes stated that Jamie Austin, Deputy General Manager, will be moving on to a new role, and acknowledged the exceptional work he accomplished during his time with DRT.

4.2 Jamie Austin, Deputy General Manager, Durham Region Transit Re: Re: Durham Region Transit 2023 Business Plan and Budget (2023-DRT-07) [Item 7.2]

J. Austin, Deputy General Manager, Business Services, and N. Pincombe, Director, Business Planning and Budgeting, Finance Department, provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Durham Region Transit 2023 Business Plan and Budget.

Highlights of the presentation included:

- 2023 Business Plans and Budgets - Durham Region Transit
- 2022 – Ridership Returning
- 2022 Accomplishments
 - Service Improvements
 - Community and Customer Service
- 2023 Proposed Expenditures & Financing
- 2023 Strategic Highlights
- 2023 Business Plans and Budgets
 - Risks and Uncertainties
- Beyond the 2023 Business Plans and Budget
 - Forecasted Annualization Impacts and Investments Needs

N. Pincombe stated that the 2023 Durham Region Transit Budget aligns with the Council approved corporate budget guideline and meets the current economic challenges such as rising inflation; advances the goals of the Region's Strategic Plan; and, accounts for future growth of the Region and its communities. N. Pincombe also stated that the recommendations adopted by the Transit Executive Committee will be brought forward to the Finance and Administration Committee on March 21st, and Regional Council on March 29th.

J. Austin provided an overview of the 2022 accomplishments such as positive ridership recovery levels; monthly revenue growth; service improvements including solar powered digital signage pilot program providing live real-time updates on departure times; and, initiatives towards the E-Mission Zero electrification plan to transition the transit fleet to zero green house gas emission vehicles by 2037. He stated that provincial funding through the Safe Restart program was key to the budget in 2022, but there has not been an announcement to extend the program into 2023.

J. Austin provided an overview of the 2023 proposed expenditures and financing. He also provided an overview of the strategic highlights for 2023 which include the Transit Service and Financing Strategy (2023-2032); fare and U-Pass rate increases; Safe Restart funding to offset ongoing impacts of COVID-19 pandemic expenditures; reduced repair costs; 18 new full-time positions; the establishment of a DRT charter service at full cost recovery; and, capital investments of \$89.7 million.

J. Austin outlined the risks and uncertainties of the budget such as ongoing pandemic recovery impacts; uncertainty related to provincial and federal funding support; supply chain challenges for parts and equipment; and, fuel price fluctuations and maintenance costs. J. Austin provided an overview of the forecasted annualized impacts and investment needs.

Staff responded to questions regarding zero emission buses and the infrastructure required; mechanic and technician training for zero emission vehicles; and, the duration of a charge of the batteries for zero emission vehicles.

Discussion ensued with respect to a comparison of diesel and electric buses. B. Holmes advised that staff will report back to the committee and provide an overview of the transition to electric vehicles and a comparison of the diesel and electric buses.

N. Taylor, Commissioner of Finance, and N. Pincombe responded to questions regarding inflationary pressures and fuel costs; and savings due to zero emission initiatives over ten years.

5. Delegations

5.1 Marion Fulcher, Durham Resident Re: Durham Region Transit Specialized Services

M. Fulcher appeared before the committee regarding problems she has been encountering recently with Durham Region Transit Specialized Services. M. Fulcher stated that her daughter that has special needs uses specialized services three times a week to go to the Abilities Centre in Whitby and the Community Participation Program in Ajax.

M. Fulcher provided some background on her previous experience utilizing specialized services and noted that for the most part the system worked well.

M. Fulcher stated a few months ago she started encountering problems in scheduling a bus for the times needed to get her daughter to her programs. She stated with the new program she is required to schedule a ride seven days in advance but recently many trips she was able to book were cancelled or delayed. She noted that since Durham Transit merged On Demand and Specialized Services there has been issues with the service provided. The current situation is having a significant impact on the lives of individuals who already face many obstacles in their daily routine and is not meeting the needs of the special needs community.

M. Fulcher responded to questions from the Committee.

B. Holmes advised that Specialized Services through the amalgamated On-Demand service provides equity for eligible residents to access the system, and DRT do not prioritize public transit trips consistent with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) requirements for a public transportation service. He also stated that DRT is putting in place measures to address reliability of the service for equitable access.

6. Correspondence

6.1 Correspondence from Dana Nicholls, Durham Resident, re: Durham Region Transit Specialized Services

Moved by Commissioner Wotten, Seconded by Commissioner Roy,
(11) That the correspondence received from Dana Nicholls, regarding specialized services be referred to staff to review and respond.

CARRIED

6.2 Correspondence from Nicole James-Wright, Durham Resident, re: Durham Region Transit Specialized Services

Moved by Commissioner Brenner, Seconded by Commissioner Anderson,
(12) That the correspondence received from Nicole James-Wright regarding specialized services be referred to staff to review and respond.

CARRIED

7. Reports

7.1 General Manager's Report - March 2023 (2023-DRT-06)

Report #2023-DRT-06 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

B. Holmes responded to a question regarding the three new apprentice positions for licenced mechanics.

Moved by Regional Chair Henry, Seconded by Commissioner Brenner,
(13) That Report #2022-DRT-06 of the General Manager, Durham Region Transit be received for information

CARRIED

7.2 Durham Region Transit Business Plan and Budget Report (2023-DRT-07)

Report #2023-DRT-07 from B. Holmes, General Manager, Durham Region Transit, was received.

Moved by Commissioner Garrod, Seconded by Commissioner Brenner,
(14) That we recommend to the Finance and Administration Committee for subsequent recommendation to Regional Council:

That the 2023 Durham Region Transit Business Plans and Budget be approved.

CARRIED

This matter will be considered by the Finance and Administration Committee on March 21, 2023 and presented to Regional Council on March 29, 2023.

8. Advisory Committee Resolutions

There were no advisory committee resolutions to be considered.

9. Confidential Matters

There were no confidential matters to be considered.

10. Other Business

There was no other business to be considered.

11. Date of Next Meeting

The next regularly scheduled Durham Region Transit Executive Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 5, 2023 at 1:30 PM in the Council Chambers, Regional Headquarters Building, 605 Rossland Road East, Whitby.

12. Adjournment

Moved by Commissioner Wotten, Seconded by Commissioner Roy,
(15) That the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM

Respectfully submitted,

M. Crawford, Chair

L. Soto Maya, Committee Clerk