

**EDMONTON TRANSIT SYSTEM ADVISORY BOARD**  
**MEETING #7, JULY 25, 2011**  
**HERITAGE ROOM, CITY HALL**

**PRESENT:** Brian Marcotte, John Doucette, John Vandenberg, Ryan Orchard,  
Christopher Dulaba, Bruce Robertson, Masood Makarechian, John Hayes,  
Gordon Smith, Leanne Landry, Elizabeth Johnston

**ABSENT:** Vaughan Hoy, Stu Litwinowich

**ETS AND CITY STAFF:** Wes Brodhead, Vicki Luxton

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

- M. Makarechian called the meeting to order at 17:30 hr.

**2. AGENDA REVIEW**

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MOVED: by J. Vandenberg/B. Robertson to approve the July 25, 2011 agenda.

**CARRIED**

Agenda  
Approved

**5. REVIEW OF JUNE 27TH, MEETING MINUTES**

- On Page 5 of 9, third last bullet, last sentence – change to: “Council could give us direction for two-thirds of our time and leave a third to our own devices to choose our priorities”.

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MOVED: by B. Robertson/J. Hayes to approve the amended June 27, 2011 minutes.

**CARRIED**

Amended  
Minutes  
Approved

**5. TASK GROUP PRESENTATIONS**

- Bylaw and Mandate Review Task Group (M. Makarechian)
  - Will be holding a Task Group meeting later this evening.
- Marketing Standing Committee (J. Vandenberg)
  - The Marketing group did not meet this month. After consulting with the members of this task group, we expect to meet in early August.
  - Questions/Comments:
    - ❖ *Is there an emphasis on the marketing focus in the next few months and does this task group need more members?* When this group was brought forward in January, a six month action plan was in place and much of that action plan has been accomplished. In the next couple of weeks J. Vandenberg will consult with the task group members about what our plans are going forward to the end of the year. A tentative action plan will be brought forward to the main ETSAB members in August or September. More members are certainly welcome.
- Fare Policy Task Review Group (M. Makarechian)
  - This task group has not met this month but expects to meet a couple of times before September.
  - L. Landry volunteered to chair this task group.

- LRT Task Group (B. Robertson)
  - This task group did not meet this month.
- Commuter Rail (J. Hayes)
  - This task group has consulted and will bring two recommendations forward next month:
    - 1) The City of Edmonton be encouraged to maintain pro-recreational and transportation for all railway right-of-ways in the City and;
    - 2) 2) The City investigate and consider problems to look at inexpensive infrastructure way of getting transit heavy rail along one or two of the lines leading into Edmonton, specifically the one to the west and the one from the south. There are major populations and the lines are relatively direct. There is not a good line from the east or the north.
  - The task group will then be disbanded.
  - Questions/Comments:
    - ❖ *As part of your group's review, what did the City say about these rail lines in their long term plan?* The City documents do not say much. J. Hayes was truly discouraged but did find for reference to the rail lines for opportunities for trail development and recreation, but there is no discussion of them as transportation corridors. If you look at a map of the City most of them do not automatically scream "I am a really good transit corridor" because they do not go downtown. But some have potential as there is a line that does go directly from the airport to Sherwood Park. This may not lead to mind an obvious transit corridor but on the other hand it might be the kind of thing that you can run a train along four times a year and the track is already there. The first of two obvious routes are: Wetaskiwin, Millet, Leduc, Nisku, and the airport; and the other one from the west, Spruce Grove, Stony Plain, Edmonton. It has been done in Vancouver, Montreal, Toronto and 184 American cities.
    - ❖ This group recognizes the problems – there are jurisdictional issues with politics and with ownership of the right-of-ways, which are Canadian National and Canadian Pacific, but they are not insurmountable and they are weighted up by how economical it is. A railway can be built for a few million dollars because it is sitting there with just a matter of getting a right to run a train on it. We have looked at the cost of the LRT to go from Lewis Farms to Mill Woods being 3.2 billion dollars and in real terms about 5 billion dollars when it is actually built. The cost of setting up the West Coast Express's first trial run was 1.1 million dollars that is almost what it costs to run the bus to the airport. The rolling stock can be borrowed because there is a lot of rail stock that is unused. They did it in Vancouver with retrofitting a few cars and put it behind an engine and ran it from an ATCO trailer in Mission into downtown Vancouver. The cost of setting it up was the cost of printing schedules and operators, so it was very cheap. We could have a rail line from Stony Plain, Spruce Grove to Edmonton for the same cost as the Belvedere and McKernan stations.
    - ❖ *Are these right-of-ways largely unused?* No, but most of them are used because that is the advantage if they were unused the track would be torn up. They are used and the tracks for Spruce Grove and Stony Plain

are the main line for the CN across Canada. They run twenty-six trains, twelve east-bound and fourteen west-bound a day. There is a lot of play in there and it is double-track with just a matter of scheduling them. The line south is quite underused, maybe four trains a day.

ETSAB Bylaw 8353 Special Meeting

○ Comments (J. Vandenbeld)

- ❖ ETS is making some significant improvements to clarify the language of the bylaw. A couple of points that ETSAB members brought up is when a person cannot bring any animals on board unless the animals are confined to a cage. But there is also the fee structure of \$100.00 fine for any animals that are confined. This is going to be rectified to say there is no longer a fine for animals that are lawfully confined. There was some discussion about bikes on ETS, and G. Smith had a lot of useful comments regarding smoking and things of that nature not being communicated well.
- ❖ ETS went to Council for proposals for a revised fine schedule and that was approved, but at the same time Council asked questions which demonstrated that the entire bylaw may merit review. There were a lot of details, inconsistencies, and different behaviour that is a violation on ETS. So the whole bylaw, at direction from Council, is being reviewed and is going back to TIC for September 20<sup>th</sup>. So that is why ETSAB was asked to provide their feedback so quickly.
- ❖ In relation to the fining issue I raised the Calgary policy of dogs on leash, so this was asked if there was any thought of bringing this to Edmonton.
- ❖ We talked about Segways and whether they need to be specifically addressed or whether they needed to be treated like bicycles. There were some sections that need to be removed because they are redundant and covered by other City bylaws pertaining to conduct in public places.
- ❖ Another good change was the original bylaw was written in 1998 so this is being reviewed thirteen years later. In 1998 there was not nearly the predominance of non-storable cups. So when the bylaw was saying you cannot bring liquids onto the train or the bus, they were thinking about Styrofoam cups. Now it is a lot easier to take drinks onto the bus that will not spill, so this bylaw is being revised and using more general language.
- ❖ We also learned that there are some great efforts to manage problems rather than just rely on the fines, which was very encouraging, through the Capital Clean Up and proactive work being done.

**6. MANAGER'S REPORT (W. BRODHEAD)**

• Highlights:

- ❖ W. Brodhead touched on the highlights in the Manager's report.

○ Questions and Comments

- ❖ *Question about DATS's sixteen new vehicles, is that sixteen in addition or the sixteen including some that are already there? These are replacement units.*
- ❖ *On the little community buses, are the drivers have the same degree of capability, efficiency or expectations as on the big bus? Our*

expectation of our community shuttle bus and the conventional certainly is for high level professional, safe operation of the vehicle. If there is an issue of competency out there, please give me a call. Personally, I will look after this and get someone out there to do an assessment. One of the things we have changed in our hiring/training is, and this has occurred in the last two years, is introducing more objective training and assessment techniques within the driver/training program. So you have an instructor riding the bus with the trainee and there is technology that goes along with him to define their competencies. If we are talking left turns, idling time, driving, breaking, there is technology on the bus that measures the actual performance of the operators. There are five camera systems which are actually mounted on the bus. So when you say to the trainee – at this location, at this time, this is the driving error that you displayed, we are able to reinforce that with real time information so that you have got video data, you have speed, breaking force right off the engine that you can show the operator. So there is no question about whether it is about the instructor who is just having a bad day. The feedback is quantifiable and it is objective. To reiterate, there is no difference in the expectation of professional driving standards between conventional transit operators and community service transit operators (small bus).

- ❖ *The Safe Driving Awards for DATS, is there something similar for ETS?*  
Out of the 1500 operators, we have about 900 that earned their safe driving award this year. The criteria are they have to put about 1065 hours behind the wheel actively, and they have to go through the year preventable accident free. That is how we define if you are a safe driver or not.
- ❖ *Report 6.10 – North LRT EPCOR Transmission Lines Change Order - Councillor Leibovici made a motion to increase the amount by eight million dollars to bring the total to amount to eighteen million dollars, can you comment on that?* No, but I can find out the person who can comment on this.
- ❖ *Free ETS Service for the Premier's Breakfast and again for the Indy, how does that show up on ETS's budget? What are the criteria for which events get free service and which events do not get free service?*  
There is a process through Dennis's area where free service can be requested, sometimes it is provided as part of the overall program of the event and ETS is actually reimbursed for some of their value of kind. *Is the free service for the Indy, is this new this year?* Yes, this is new this year. It was the deduction in the service and part of the value in kind that the City offered up to them.
- ❖ *A follow-up to B. Robertson's question, is some of it a trade up with advertising?* Yes, ETS will get advertising with our logo on the program or value of kind for transit services. The football is part of the Green and Go program, so if you buy the ticket than you get on the Park 'n Ride for free. The cost of the Park 'n Ride program is incorporated in the ticket itself, so it is not like the Edmonton Eskimos are getting free service, there is payback to the City.

## 7. INFORMATION SECTION

- August Meeting Plan (M. Makarechian)

- It was decided to hold an August meeting on Monday, August 22, 2011.

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MOVED: by J. Vandenberg/J. Hayes to hold an August meeting on Monday,  
August 22, 2011. **CARRIED**

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- TIC Lunch Meeting (M. Makarechian)

- J. Vandenberg, G. Smith, B. Robertson, Ryan Orchard, C. Dulaba, and M. Makarechian will be able to attend the luncheon meeting with TIC members on Monday, August 29, 2011.

- CUTA Delegate Selection (M. Makarechian)

- November 5-9, 2011 in Toronto, Ontario.
- CUTA delegate will be determined at the meeting in August.

- October Meeting Date (M. Makarechian)

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MOVED: by J. Doucette/G. Smith to hold an October meeting on Monday,  
October 24, 2011. **CARRIED**

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- September Meeting to be held at Percy Wickman Garage (DATS) (M. Makarechian)

- It was decided to hold the September meeting at the Percy Wickman Garage.

- November Meeting – Presentation on the LRT Updates (M. Makarechian)

- D. Geake, Director of LRT, would like to give a presentation on the LRT corridor in terms of their winter operations, including south of 51 Avenue. D. Geake will also talk about the LRT construction specifically on the North Line, and also the line upgrades completed and that are contemplated, operation of the electrical systems, and expansion of the LRT station platforms.
- After discussion it was decided that ETSAB would like to accept this presentation.

- Update on Transit to the Airport Negotiations (M. Makarechian)

- Discussion on this topic focused around putting together a formal request to administration to get an in-private update on this issue.
- B. Marcotte cannot understand why it has taken so long to negotiate this issue - as a City it is a disgrace. When the County of Leduc started their transit service it was a golden opportunity to piggyback on to it. Because they are operating their service in the peak periods, ETS could have just continued that service all day long. This should be brought up at the luncheon meeting with TIC members. We are talking a bus service every thirty minutes and if the City of Edmonton had to pay the entire cost of this service it would be two million dollars a year, with no riders. The net cost might be half million dollars a year. Why is this taking two years to do this?

- G. Smith rode the C-line and commented on the airport's bus stop which is located at the south end of the airport of the arrivals. There is only one sign in the airport that indicates that a bus stop is there and it says Bus Stop 956. It does not say where it goes, or what it is, when it runs, what it costs, and it is in an airport. J. Hayes understands that a bus stop in Calder not having a schedule at but if you can say we want to set this up to fail any louder than that. In Toronto there is an actual schedule so you don't stand there for six hours hoping against hope that a bus might show up, and then being taken to Leduc, because that is where it goes. If it is a disgrace getting the service there and it is even more of a disgrace how they are setting it up to fail. Four people are riding the service; J. Hayes thinks it is a miracle that four people have managed to find it. G. Smith stated you need to go on an hour trip before you get to the airport. J. Hayes does not know who decided that this is an issue they do not want, but the negotiations could be just a few phone calls. Anyway, if it does not work, stop doing it, but to set it up like this because a lot of people who fly on planes take transit to the airport. M. Makarechian had friends who had to seek it out at the airport at information. Where is it, when will it come by, so information is not readily available at the airport.
- M. Makarechian thinks it is time for ETSAB to comment again on how it has been implemented and what is taking negotiations so long. A major hurdle has been removed with the deregulation, as K. Koropeski explained there is no appeal process. So if the province awards the route license, no one can slow it down at this point by appealing it. B. Marcotte stated that as long as you are a safe operator, you can operate anywhere to anywhere. The reality is if Edmonton Council really wants service to the airport they can force it in a hurry. Six out of the 15 members of the board at the airport are appointed by the City. All the Mayor has to do is pick up the phone, call the members that Edmonton appoints to the Airport Authority and say look we want this bus service starting immediately. This is the only major airport in Canada without bus service - this is a disgrace and should go public; you have to get vocal. We are talking Edmonton Transit does not want to put one cent into anything outside its boundary, but at least they are in negotiations. Maybe they are the wrong people to lead this thing. Maybe it just needs to be the Mayor, the Chair of the Airport Authority, and the Mayor of Leduc and let's get a deal. This needs to be communicated to Council that this is silly.
- J. Hayes thinks the real problem is that with the ridership of two or four from the airport they are creating a scenario where they can report back that there is no demand. All the other things are problematic but the fact that when ETSAB goes before TIC, people who do not want this service, will walk up and say they are running eight buses a day and they have only picked up four passengers a day on it on average, obviously there is no demand. And whoever is opposed to it has gone out of their way to create that demand that is really J. Hayes' point.
- The fifteen riders per day stated by K. Koropeski said is reasonable service. Marketing of this is a problem because at Century Park there is a little sign, 12" x 6" giving the bus number on it - #590 - Airport. That is all it has on it, with no schedule. The City of Edmonton is viewing this service as the

City of Leduc service. The City of Leduc is paying one hundred percent of the cost and is responsible for marketing, so it is a hands off from ETS's perspective.

- More discussion followed on the strategy to get this update from either administration at ETSAB's next meeting on August 22nd or through TIC at the luncheon meeting scheduled for August 29, 2011.
- V. Luxton will share all airport transit reports with the two new members via email.

Motion  
Approved

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MOVED: by B. Marcotte/J. Vandenbeld to ask ETS administration to come to ETSAB's August 22, 2011 meeting to give the members an in-camera briefing on the status of bus service to the International Airport. **CARRIED**

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#### 8. **TOPIC(S) OF THE NIGHT**

- Invitation to ETS administration to ETSAB's August 22, 2011 meeting.

Motion  
Approved

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MOVED: by J. Doucette/J. Hayes to adjourn the July 25, 2011 ETSAB Meeting at 19:05 hours. **CARRIED**

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**Next meeting: Monday, August 22, 2011 in Conference Room B, Conference Level of Scotia Place**