

EDMONTON TRANSIT SYSTEM ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING #5, MAY 30, 2011
SCOTIA PLACE CONFERENCE CENTRE ROOM A

PRESENT: Vaughan Hoy, John Doucette, John Vandenberg, Leanne Landry, Gordon Smith, Ryan Orchard, Christopher Dulaba, Bruce Robertson, Brian Marcotte

ABSENT: Masood Makarechian, John Hayes, Elizabeth Johnston, Stu Litwinowich

ETS AND CITY STAFF: Dennis Nowicki

GUEST: Josh Stock (Leading the Way Youth Summit delegate)

1. CALL TO ORDER

- V. Hoy called the meeting to order at 17:30 hr.

2. AGENDA REVIEW

MOVED: by J. Doucette/L. Landry to approve the May 30, 2011 agenda.

CARRIED

Agenda
Approved

5. REVIEW OF MAY 2, MEETING MINUTES

- B. Marcotte amendment on Page 8, first paragraph, change “porters” to “the Quarters, the airport land”
- J. Vandenberg amendment - on Page 5, first bullet, delete “Transportation Master Plan” and amend “.... as described in the “Municipal Governance Act.”

MOVED: by B. Marcotte/J. Doucette to approve the amended May 2, 2011 minutes.

CARRIED

Amended
Minutes
Approved

5. TASK GROUP PRESENTATIONS

- *Bylaw and Mandate Review Task Group (V. Hoy)*

MOVED: by J. Vandenberg/B. Robertson to move In-Private.

CARRIED

Time: 17:35 hr

MOVED: by J. Doucette/C. Dulaba to come out of Private and to keep the content of the discussion out of the minutes as per section 23 and 24 of the Freedom of Information and Protection (FOIP) Act.

CARRIED

Time: 18:10 hr

- M. Makarechian will represent ETSAB at the June 21 Council Meeting facilitated discussion.
- *Marketing Standing Committee (J. Vandenberg)*
 - This task group met on Monday, May 16, 2011 with N. Walters of Business Development about the Strategic Marketing Plan for 2012-2014.

- Business Development is working on a number of good initiatives over the next three years.
- One interesting fact worth mentioning is that 70 per cent of ETS users are choice users that have the means to drive to work or school, etc. but they choose to take transit. So Business Development's program "*ETS @ Work*" is looking into expanding that number. The major drop-off in ridership as discussed at this meeting is generally when students move from University to work so this task group's main question is - are there any targeted initiatives that can bridge that gap to have less of a drop-off between that period? This task group did not have any specifics for suggestions but it was noted that Business Development did not have any ideas at this time.
- Questions and Comments
 - ❖ *Do they look at what proportion of the ridership transfer or even programs around smoother transferring because that is a show stopper for me? If I can't do it on one bus, I would probably not take transit.* Yes, that is an operational thing and N. Walters is working within an existing framework. Yes, there are a lot of things Edmonton Transit could do to make themselves attractive to commuters. As marketing group you cannot say reduce transfers because that is an operational decision.
 - ❖ *Was there anything you did not like that Business Development was doing?* The task group did not identify anything that we were not in agreement with but thought there were more initiatives that Business Development could do more with, in particular in capturing some of the younger riders. We also had concerns with a number of the matrices being quite broad with no baseline numbers. N. Walters said because this is the first time this has been done, a baseline needs to be established and they can work from that. Business Development hopes to have this baseline by the end of the year and then the initiative can be evaluated based on whatever the baseline is by 2014.
- DATS Efficiency Task Group (G. Smith)
 - B. Marcotte, E. Johnston and G. Smith met with L. Stewart from DATS. The questions and answers that were presented to L. Stewart at this meeting were distributed to all ETSAB members.
 - Each question was touched upon by G. Smith.
 - Highlights:
 - ❖ L. Stewart's comment on Question One about DATS purchasing 10 to 14 passenger buses when DATS productivity figure is around 2.6 persons per hour was based on the demographics of the mix of clients traveling on DATS. This mix has dramatically changed and there are more ambulatory clients with group and day programs/outings than there are wheelchairs and a greater number of bus seats are required.
 - ❖ Patrons are picked up from one location and several DATS vehicles show up. There are a couple of reasons for this. Sometimes there are drivers out in the area and rather than have those drivers do nothing, some of these trips are off-loaded. At remote areas of the city mini vans are sent to such situations to accommodate the client from a time factor.
 - ❖ The question regarding the high volume of phone calls; DATS has just

started recently implementing on-line bookings that may relieve some of the pressure on the telephones. For a number of the registrants the caregiver does the booking on behalf of the client who may be in a group home setting. Right now the on-line booking is low but this is expected to increase in the future.

- ❖ DATS plans to tweak the computer program to prevent creating deadhead trips, which can be a problem.

○ Questions and Comments:

- ❖ *Where is the rider, using a wheelchair or scooter, sitting in the mini van? Right over the axle. Sitting over the axle - the suspension is more compressed so the ride is rough.*

- ❖ *A considerable amount of time was spent in re-identifying some serious issues/questions that you had, why did you toss that out? E. Johnston presented the original group of questions to L. Stewart through DAG so this group went with the original questions. At the top of the handout it states that these are ETSAB questions but these were your questions and not ETSAB's? That is true.*

- ❖ *What an operational challenging entity DATS is, the scheduling and the specific needs of it. What does L. Stewart have for support for logistics analysis or software implementation of people that are good at that? The program used at DATS has been operated in the United States for some time and they do have a lot of statistics on how well that program works and D. Nowicki would be better to tell you, but the documentation for that program was researched quite extensively before they brought it into DATS. D. Nowicki stated that DATS selected Trapeze and what DATS is experiencing is not unusual for new software being implemented for the first time. There are still dedicated people whose job is to tweak the software which is ongoing. B. Marcotte stated L. Stewart did agree when you run into another experience where you live in the south end and you are coming downtown, sometimes you are taken to the west end before you are brought downtown, or you have two DATS vehicles at the same location and are headed in the same direction. When this happens, L. Stewart wants you to call her and she will go into the system to find out what happened. Then this will be written up and put in DATS' newsletter so other riders will know this is not an acceptable situation. There usually is some explanation such as cancellations. This is a very heavily subsidized system.*

- ❖ *What is the cost per trip, not the cost the passenger pays? 25-26 dollars. How much would it cost if the system was done away with and you go solely with accessible cabs? If it is booked through DATS using the Yellow Cab there is a contract and the city would base the payment on the negotiated rate. The flat rate is the most economical way to go and easier to budget than a metered rate. When DATS contracts out to Yellow Cab, a flat rate of 20 dollars is paid to Yellow Cab, is that correct? Yes, that is correct. Why would the City operate their own fleet if it presumably cheaper to contract it out? The privately owned fleet does not have enough vehicles that are wheel chair accessible.*

- Fare Policy Task Review Group (L. Landry)
 - This task group has not met this month.
- LRT Task Group (B. Robertson)
 - This task group met earlier this month to discuss the downtown connector and the funding for the LRT and after intense discussions it was decided the task group members supported the recommendations that administration were making. Notes to this effect have not been drafted but this task group will come out in favour of both reports and the downtown connector concept plan.
 - Questions and Comments
 - ❖ *Were there any issues you did identify as being not so favorable?* We discussed extensively on the staging of funding and where the stages should be.
 - ❖ It was decided to keep this task group alive as more reports will be flowing through council on the LRT in the near future.
- Commuter Rail (J. Hayes)
 - No report.

6. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Highlights:
 - Potential Postal Strike
 - ❖ D. Nowicki advised ETSAB that the On-Line Store (fare product sales) has been temporarily suspended due to threat of a postal strike. ETS administration is also considering its options for AISH pass program and the mail-out.
 - U2 Concert
 - ❖ U2 Concert is being held June 1; largest crowd ever for Commonwealth Stadium is anticipated; transit service will be enhanced, and staff on-site and in the Emergency Operations Centre to deal with any issues that may arise.
 - ETS is now on Facebook
 - ❖ ETS has launched on Facebook and at this time is “pushing” information out; insufficient staff resources to provide on-going two-way dialogue; ETS has used Twitter for special announcements such as major service change announcements.
 - Organizational Changes
 - ❖ City Corporation implementing an organizational change effective June 1. D. Nowicki outlined the highlights to meeting attendees. Corporation will have six departments: Sustainable Development, Transportation Services, Infrastructure Services, Community Services, Financial Services and Corporate Services; Corporate Communications and Intergovernmental Affairs will report directly to the City Manager. Structure aligns closely with the strategic direction approved by Council in “The Ways”. Transportation Services is focused on the “Way We Move” and will now include Roads Design and Construction, and LRT Design and Construction, along with Edmonton Transit, Transportation Operations and Transportation Planning. Fleet Services remains in Corporate Services. Transition will occur in three stages. Transportation and Public Works Committee of City Council will now

be called Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (TIC).

○ Questions and Comments

- ❖ *What is “Transformational Projects” in Sustainable Development?* D. Nowicki to find out. (Update: Transformational Projects is a holding area for major projects such as Airport redevelopment and arena redevelopment, and it is not intended to have permanent staff assigned.)
- ❖ *Charge Park ‘n Ride, is it too early to ask how it is going?* Century Park site sold out right away with Clareview following. Belvedere and Stadium have proven to be slower sales and did ETS reduce the number of pay stalls at Stadium and opened up more for the general public. D. Nowicki will include the upgraded status on this pilot project for the next month’s Manager’s Report.
- ❖ *Digital Bus Pass?* The evaluation is being done on this project. It is a hieroglyphic image on Apple devices only.

7. INFORMATION SECTION

- DAG Report (E. Johnston) – No report.
- ATU Local 569 Report (S. Litwinowich) – No report.
- LTW Youth Summit (M. Makarechian)
 - M. Makarechian, Gordon Smith and John Vandenberg participated and assisted in the event; very impressed by the quality of youth delegates and the sessions. Suggest age group be limited in future events to 18-25 years. Calgary Transit has committed to host the 2013 summit.
- Community Fair (May 28, 2011 at West Edmonton Mall, Phase I)
 - Event held in Phase I of WEM on May 28; attendance was lighter than the past events held in conjunction with the 2009 and 2010 SLRT extension openings, but greater attendance than the previous Community Conferences. J. Vandenberg indicated that many attendees at ETSAB booth were interested in the LRT extension.
- TIC Breakfast Meeting
 - Next TIC meetings scheduled June 14 and 28, and July 12. Seven members (of those in attendance) could be available for a June 28 meeting. D. Nowicki to have V. Luxton inquire about making arrangements for that day – to be confirmed.
- Summer Meeting Schedule
 - Summer meetings scheduled July 25 and August 29. Need to determine upcoming workload and priorities, and availability of members. Review at next meeting on June 27th.

8. TOPIC(S) OF THE NIGHT

- Bylaw and Mandate Review and ETSAB is eagerly looking forward to June 21 meeting facilitated discussion with Council.

MOVED: by J. Vandenberg/J. Doucette to adjourn the May 30, 2011 ETSAB Meeting at 20:05 hours.

CARRIED

Motion
Approved

Next meeting: Monday, June 27, 2011 in the Heritage Room, City Hall