

MINUTES

TRANSIT SERVICES COMMITTEE

OTTAWA-CARLETON REGIONAL TRANSIT COMMISSION

CHAMPLAIN ROOM

WEDNESDAY, 28 APRIL 1999

8:45 A.M.

PRESENT

Chair: A. Loney

Members: M. Bellemare, L. Davis, C. Doucet D. Holmes, H. Kreling,

Regrets: W. Byrne, J. Legendre

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

**That the Transit Services Committee confirm the Minutes of the meeting of 24 March 1999.**

CARRIED

REGULAR ITEMS

EXPANDING OC TRANSPRO SERVICES FOR  
OTTAWA-CARLETON DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD STUDENTS

- Interim General Manager's report dated 15 Apr 99

Dr. Helen Gault, Manager, Planning and Development, presented the report. She noted there has been a high level of cooperation between the School Boards and OC Transpo, citing specifically the Boards' efforts to allow school start times to be as close as possible to 9:00 a.m. In turn, OC Transpo will provide attractive new options to potentially 2,400 students in this market. Dr. Gault estimated the cost of service in 1999 to be \$275,000, with potentially between \$36,000 and \$66,000 in estimated monthly revenues based on take-up rates of 40 to 70%.

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- Notes:
1. Underlining indicates new or amended recommendations approved by Committee.
  2. Reports requiring consideration will be forwarded to the Commission at its meeting of 28 April 1999 in Transit Services Report No. 99-13.

Speaking to the issue of information and communication, Dr. Gault said three open houses will be set up where OC Transpo staff will provide parents, students and staff with service information and timetables. She pointed out there may be small variations at the outset, but staff will respond to unforeseen needs by adjusting service in the first few days of the school year.

Commissioner H. Kreling suggested it be communicated to open house participants how much the School Boards are saving by discontinuing school bus service. In addition, the public should be informed about what the Province of Ontario is doing by downloading services to municipalities and the impact this is having in Ottawa-Carleton.

Commissioner D. Holmes said she was pleased to see the elimination of the “yellow school bus”. She asked that there be discussion at the Transportation Committee about the need for ancillary services such as sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and other measures to accommodate the new clients.

Commissioner L. Davis wanted to know whether certain direct routes could become “yellow school buses” if the numbers support it. Dr. Gault replied that staff would look at the best possible uses, however the service will remain a public transit service. Commissioner Davis pointed out that rolling out the new service presents an excellent opportunity to market the year-round passes to a new clientele.

The Transit Committee Chair, A. Loney, said staff should be careful not to infer OC Transpo has taken over school busing when, in reality, it is picking up the service because of the Boards’ decisions. It should also not be implied that parents were not paying for school busing since these costs were paid through taxation.

The Committee then considered the staff recommendation:

**That the Transit Services Committee recommend to the Commission the provision of an additional 4,800 hours of service in 1999, at a cost of approximately \$275,000, to provide transit service to Ottawa-Carleton District School Board students who will no longer be eligible for yellow school buses this fall. Some of these costs are expected to be offset by revenues, depending on the numbers of students who actually switch to OC Transpo.**

CARRIED

INQUIRIES

1. PARATRANSPO SERVICE

Commissioner L. Davis commented that the level of frustration of persons trying to book ParaTranspo service has reached new heights. She expressed the view it would be timely for the Commission to look at the service with a view to improving it. The Interim General Manager, M. Sheflin, responded by saying staff will prepare a briefing on this matter for submission to the Transit Committee in June 1999.

2. REMOVAL OF SERVICE ON WESTERN AVENUE

Commissioner L. Davis asked whether service can be removed from Western Avenue immediately, as opposed to awaiting the September timeline. S. Rathwell said staff will recommend the service be removed but is not in a position to implement this change immediately because of logistical considerations. Commissioner Davis expressed her reluctance to tell the community it will have to wait since the change was requested some time ago and there is an expectation the service will soon be removed. H. Gault proposed that staff discuss the matter with Commissioner Davis and report back on options within the context of the Transplan 99.

3. REPORT ON SEASONAL SCHEDULE CHANGES

Commissioner M. Bellemare asked that staff report back on whether seasonal schedule changes are necessary, what is the level of demand and the level of ridership throughout the year and how long has the Commission operated in this manner. Dr. Gault indicated the report could be presented in June.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

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CHAIR

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CO-ORDINATOR