



ACTION

**Kenora Transit Commission Meeting
Minutes**

**Tuesday, January 22, 2013
10:00 a.m.
City Council Chambers**

PRESENT: Councillor Rod McKay, Chair (arrived at 10:05 a.m.)
Murray English
Rick Vincent
Wayne Ficek
Mike Mostow, Fleet Supervisor
Rick Perchuk, Operations Manager
Karen Brown, CAO
Heather Kasprick, Deputy Clerk/POA Supervisor
Heather Lajeunesse, Administrative Assistant
Denise Aarrestad, First Canada
Karen Redden, First Canada
Dave Havill, First Canada
Jackie McAllister, Handi Transit Chair (left at 10:55 a.m.)

REGRETS: Councillor Charito Drinkwalter, Alternate Member
Chris Van Walleghem

Heather Kasprick called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

**A. Declaration of Pecuniary Interest & the General Nature
Thereof**

- 1) On Today's Agenda**
- 2) From a Meeting at which a Member was not in Attendance**
There were none declared.

B. Confirmation of Minutes

Moved by M. English, Seconded by R. McKay & Carried:-
That the Minutes of the last meeting of the Kenora Transit Commission held
November 27, 2012 be confirmed as written and filed:-

D. Items:-

1. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

2. Review Routes / Express Routes

There have been concerns expressed to the City about the current transit express routes, including some issues with the start locations of these routes. The City has asked for feedback from First Canada so that concerns can be identified and addressed.

Dave Havill, a transit driver for First Canada was present at the meeting to give feedback on the concerns that he is aware of. Dave stated that the express routes are in fact a concern, that they are great idea but the biggest issue is there is currently not enough time to implement them according to the schedule. Dave distributed copies of the current express route listings and explained the concerns with each route. Timing was noted as the biggest concern, especially in poor weather conditions adding that the schedule falls behind quickly due to any backlogs at the beginning of the day. Trains were also noted as a major cause of time constraints, especially at the Government Road crossing in Keewatin. Safety is a concern and a priority at First Canada and they will not compensate for time lost by having the buses travel over the speed limit. As well, drivers are not getting adequate breaks during their shifts. There was mention of the ridership and concerns were raised about continuing with routes that are inefficient, as on most occasions there are there no passengers.

Dave made some suggestions for changes, which includes the removal of some of the express routes and additions to the existing regular routes. He believes that it will keep the transit on time and create an extra fifteen minutes to do maintenance on the buses if required. He also suggested the elimination of some routes where there is minimal ridership. He added that riders are very frustrated and have communicated to him that they would rather lose some shorter routes in order for the bus to be on time for the longer ones.

Several other concerns were also raised during the discussion:

There was mention of Walmart and how it is difficult to go through the lot in order to drop passengers off at the front door, especially those with accessibility needs which require this. It was confirmed that going into the Walmart lot is not part of the regular route and that the bus should be turning at the intersection before entering the lot. Karen Redden confirmed that the bus will stop going to the front of Walmart doors and passengers will be notified of the change. It was suggested that those with accessibility concerns use the Handi Transit instead of the bus (if they cannot get to Walmart from the bus stop) as this is what that service is intended for. There was a suggestion to put an existing bus shelter that is not in use at the intersection by Walmart. The City will look into relocating the unused bus shelter.

There are no bus stop signs at some of the scheduled stops and there are some signs remaining where there are no longer bus stops. The City will look into updating the signage so it is correct.

There were concerns raised about potholes at Market Square where the bus parks as well as snow removal at this stop and in other areas of the City where the bus travels. The bus turns around at Rabbit Lake Ball field where issues were noted about snow removal and other vehicle interference. The City will look into these issues.

A final concern that was raised was regarding some of the passengers that are on

First Canada

R Perchuk

R Perchuk

R Perchuk

bus which are impaired, abusive and dangerous. It was mentioned that some people just get on the bus to ride around, such as children and street people taking up space so that sometimes valid passengers cannot sit. It was inquired as to whether or not there is a policy or protocol for dealing with these people, it should be made clear that a ride is a ride or they must keep paying to stay on the bus. It was agreed that this should be addressed. Karen Redden asked that the City contact the OPP asking for regular presence around bus shelters as offenders are using them for warmth and sometimes as a bathroom. City will contact OPP about increased presence at bus stops.

**K Brown/
W Ficek**

Rod McKay stated that the City would like more data so that the numbers can be analyzed and that they are open to suggestions for changes. The City agrees that it is important to catch up with the timing while still maximizing the usage of the buses and maintaining the flow of the routes. Transit routes are no longer printed in the phone book so they can be changed easier and inquiries can be directed to the City website.

It was suggested that First Canada provide a written list of concerns and suggested solutions and submit to the City so it can be reviewed. It was further mentioned that the City has considered cancelling the Lakeside route as stats have been low but that a discussion needs to take place regarding this. Dave explained that transfers are part of the reason for these lower stats. He also referred to the closing of Zellers and that the City may want to revisit routes again after that happens.

It was decided that First Canada will provide the City a written list of route concerns and suggested solutions and the group will meet again after the list is reviewed by the City. All other concerns mentioned are to be noted as well. Karen Redden asked for the City's map of the routes to scale to use as a guide for creating the lists and recommendations. Maps to be provided.

**First Canada
R Perchuk**

Heather Kasprick inquired with First Canada about the 7:30 a.m. Keewatin route as this is the one which she receives most of the complaints on. It was confirmed that she has not received any complaints regarding this since FirstGroup took over and that the continuous complaints were due to the bus not leaving the shop fast enough in the morning due to issues with the buses.

It was suggested that installing GPSs in the buses may be another way to review the daily routes in detail. This can track how much time the bus is stopped, speed, timing, etc. in order to determine where changes can be made. Karen Redden added that First Canada has implemented GPSs for their school buses.

3. Bus Update

Mike Mostow gave an update on the buses Unit 503 (newer) and Unit 502 (older). In December the City buses were to be turned over by Excel to the City with all defect issues addressed prior to turning the units over to First Canada. The buses were turned over to the City and delivered to First Canada with an MTO safety suitable to re-register the units. A detailed inspection was then carried out by First Canada who then found list of multiple items that should have been repaired with regular maintenance by the contractor. Bus 503 (newer) was sent to Winnipeg to Boyco & Sons, a company which does repairs to transit buses and was approved by the City for the completion of repairs, with the list of repairs and is still there today. All issues are operating deficiencies that should have been addressed long ago which is likely the reason the buses had been running at 50% for some time.

Repairs which are noted as standard maintenance items will be invoiced back to Excel. Unit 502 (older) will also go to Winnipeg as well for repairs due to lack of maintenance. Currently the heat is not working and there is also another list of repairs from First Canada for that bus. It was mentioned that there are still four rims (two per bus) missing that haven't been returned by Excel. New ones will have to be purchased by the City for the new contractor if they are not found. The buses will be back in working condition in time and it is hopeful that Bus 503 will be back in operation soon.

Rick Perchuk gave an update on the new bus that is being ordered. The final purchase order for new bus \$356,735.96. It was confirmed that the bus has been ordered. The training will take place in Toronto and is part of the bus package.

4. Advertising Update

It was confirmed that the bus routes have been removed from the phone book. The City will look into promotion and advertising after the routes are confirmed and established. The information will be shared via radio, newspaper, etc. and will direct people to the city website for the updated bus information.

There was discussion of the business and product advertising that appears on the actual buses. It was confirmed that it is a contract between the advertisers and the holder of the City transit contract with the revenue from the advertising coming back to the City. This would have been arranged in the past by Excel. Karen Redden inquired as to why First Canada would be in the middle of the arrangement if the City is receiving the revenue. Heather Kasprick will look into the contract.

H Kasprick

Karen Brown shared a recent funding announcement for Thunder Bay, \$250,000 was received from FedNor for improvement to their transit stops. It was confirmed that Rick Perchuk and Jennifer Findlay, EDO are looking into this for Kenora.

5. Other Business

None

6. Next Meeting Date

An e-mail will be sent out to confirm a date and time for the week of the February 4th

Meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.