

Bus Riders of Saskatoon

Saskatoon Food Bank and Learning Centre

October 4, 2015

Facilitators: Cameron and Lila

Meeting Notes: Tracey

Presentation from Councilor Ann Iwanchuk, Councilor for Ward 3 which includes Fairhaven, Parkridge, Blairmore, Pacific Heights, and Confederation Park:

- Councilor Iwanchuk referred to two issues regarding transit about which she has received much feedback in her time on council. One was a proposed increase in seniors' bus fares during the 2012 budget deliberations and the other was a proposal to move the bus mall away from Confederation Park Shopping Centre.
- Councilor Iwanchuk has advocated for a Transit Advisory Committee which would have more power than the current meetings BRS holds with Saskatoon Transit.
- Regarding labour issues, Councilor Iwanchuk said she meets with ATU on a fairly regular basis and has been doing what she can in the background to assist both sides towards achieving a collective agreement.
- Councilor Iwanchuk has met with Jim MacDonald at Saskatoon Transit. She has been impressed with the Smile campaign which she sees as a great initiative for current users, though it doesn't necessarily attract new users.
- Though she is not a regular bus user because it is incompatible with her job which requires multiple trips per day along with requiring several different briefcases, she is considering using it more when she needs to be on campus, where parking is inaccessible. She would like to see the system work better for people in a similar position.

Question: What is the best and most effective way for our group to work with and communicate with Councilors on transit issues?

Councilor Iwanchuk: Councilors can put in inquiries if there's info we want on transit issues that would benefit the community. If there are particular questions or concerns about any issues, it is best to communicate them to Councilor's prior to decisions being made.

Comment from group: We've been told that the Advisory Committee was disbanded because people were bringing concerns and complaints that were specific to the volunteer and not representative of others. We have also heard that a new committee of Council has been proposed for transit.

Councilor Iwanchuk: Does not feel that a committee of council is the best choice, has been advocating for a Transit Advisory Committee and wants to hear more citizen voices, doesn't feel that it's a big concern if people are sharing their own individual perspective because people speaking for their own experience is the nature of having citizens on committees.

Question: What ideas do you have that aren't currently on the table re: transit but that could work?

Councilor Iwanchuk: Car parks with electrified stalls for winter

Question: How often do you (councilors) get to meet with managers?

Councilor Iwanchuk: Councillors have all been offered the opportunity to meet with the new transit manager because he is new to the position and requested a meeting with each of them. They can meet with managers upon request but phone inquiries are more common than sit-down meetings.

Question: Would you support development levies from the province to the city that are targeted for transit rather than general funding that is not earmarked?

Councilor Iwanchuk: That's not a bad idea.

Question: We've been told by the Transit Manager, Jim MacDonald that he thinks Council should determine the relative importance of coverage vs. frequency and then it is up to transit to carry out the direction of Council on that. What do you think about the importance of coverage vs. frequency?

Councilor Iwanchuk: Both are important. She relies on groups like ours for that kind of info, increased frequency at peak times is important for sure.

Question: What about extended hours on Friday and Saturday?

Councilor Iwanchuk: Everything isn't going to happen at once. As there are successes, there can be expansion.

Question: There's no sustainable way to provide transit in a sprawling city. How can we make the city more compact?

Councilor Iwanchuk: We do need to build up more than out and that's where we are headed. We have changed restrictions to allow apartments and condos to go higher.

Question/comment: The new development at 8th St. where the Safeway was doesn't fit with new rezoning for "complete streets", and seems like a lost opportunity.

Councilor Iwanchuk: Not sure about that particular situation.

Presentation from Fred Khonje, Saskatoon Carshare Coop:

- SCC is a community-owned social enterprise, a community service co-op, with multiple bottom lines (social, economic, environmental, etc.)
- Owning a car is expensive and not a great investment due to depreciation and sunk costs, so SCC is a good alternative
- having a good transit system allows people to have the confidence to get rid of their cars so our goals are similar
- SCC offers 24/7 car service through online & mobile bookings and a fob system
- SCC is useful for cyclists, bus riders, students, one-car families, businesses, etc.
- Membership options:
 - Full membership:
 - \$500 refundable membership fee
 - No monthly fee
 - \$6/hour of usage
 - First 5 km/trip free, \$0.25/km beyond that
 - Casual Membership:
 - \$10 monthly feedback
 - \$8/hour of usage
 - First 5 km/trip free, \$0.25/km beyond that
- SCC currently has a crowdfunding campaign and the perks include casual membership for a few months, bus tickets and bus passes.

Committee Updates:

- The policy and bylaw document needs to be posted on the website. Tracey will re-send it to the on-line committee ASAP.
- Internal & External committees met on Sept. 30 and made a list of groups to approach to help us find new individual members. The committee members each agreed to contact a couple of the groups on the list and we will gradually work our way through the rest of the list over the coming months. It was agreed that **we will approach these orgs about potential new members by October 25th. We will invite these members to attend our next meeting which we have rescheduled for Sunday, November 15 at 1:30 pm at the Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre.**
- There have been media inquiries about the Smile campaign and about an assault that took place on a bus.
- As there were not enough questions or comments for the City of Saskatoon to warrant a meeting, it was decided to cancel the meeting with Transit for the month of October. Sarina will contact them and will ask about the results of the Smile Campaign.
- Dan will join the external committee.
- Tracey will contact Brian Hoessler about joining the online committee.
- Sarina and Tracey will facilitate the next meeting where we hope to have some more people as a result of our recruitment efforts.