

# Bus Riders of Saskatoon

## Meeting Minutes

January 15, 2017

Roy Romanow Student Council Chamber

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Attendance: Jeff Jackson, Mairi Anderson, Peter Gallen, Alana Huckaby, Josie Steeves, Mylene Tham, Katya Macdonald, Cameron McMillan, Michael Schwandt, Robert Clipperton, Wes Cameron, Lila Wagner

### 1. Meeting open

- a. Mission, vision, and group norms
- b. Introductions

### 2. Committee updates

#### a. Finance

- Bank balance is still the same
- We Stephan approximately \$23 for website fees
- Sarina and Tracey need to be removed as signing authorities. We need two people to replace them
  - Robert motions that Tracey Mitchell and Sarina Gersher be replaced with Cameron MacMillian and Michael Schwandt as signing authorities
  - Peter seconds
  - Motion carried

#### b. Online

- Potential update of website, organisational charts, committees, meeting minutes, etc.
- New member for committee? Jeff will join committee and contact Stephan
- Cam will fix meeting minutes for past meetings
- Mairi will send minutes for last meeting (Dec. 11) to Stephan and Jeff

**c. City/Transit**

- Updates from December – December meeting cancelled, will be covered this month
- Qs: Ask base questions from YXE Let's Talk, Fare Review info, could Bus Riders access the shuttle bus to get to the meeting at the Bus Barns
- Representatives for next meeting – Friday, January 20: Cam, Jeff, Peter will carpool, Alana as alternate

**d. Media**

- Cam and Mairi had radio interview with Talking Radical Radio which came out last week and is available on [rabble.ca](http://rabble.ca)

**3. Correspondence**

- a. Updates on email/phone contact list**

**4. New Business**

- a. YXE Let's Talk – update from Josie Steeves**

- Safety and public transportation – talks are in response to a few incidents. Discussions done by Bus Riders and community groups, Transit was not included as host.
- Current draft states it will “Improve or implement safety procedures for City Transit”
- Trends in passenger safety: Josie looked at other cities of comparable size – many other cities are having similar discussions. Vancouver is very active – blog spurred conversations. Victoria implemented 1 year pilot project to install video cameras in busses. Edmonton has interesting advertising campaign on what to do if you see violence. Calgary has a code of conduct. Thunder Bay uses video cameras. Ottawa has 10-point safety plan. Saskatoon has very little, even though Transit's mission

includes “safety”. Transit is everywhere in the growth plan, but the only procedure they have is a silent alarm button for drivers.

- Ottawa: identifying best safety practices, working with stakeholders
- Saskatoon has not put money into infrastructure resources for safety on busses, whereas other cities have.
- Saskatoon has one camera on bus, whereas other cities have 6. Where are the “dead zones” on Saskatoon buses?
- Themes from report: violence from drunken passengers, violence or discrimination from drivers to riders, lengthy waits between transfers, gender-based discrimination and assaults, community members standing up for each other or not, language ability, accessibility and appearance of stops, emergency buttons, stricter rules for abusers, growing the transit community.
- This data is hugely important for giving perspectives from riders – shows more than basic statistics do. How people perceive safety is important! While there may be 10 assaults reported, that does not mean there have only been 10 assaults.
- Recommendations to come out of YXE Let’s Talk: collecting data (performance management, etc.), looking at passenger experience and safety as a whole (transit is from door to door, not just on bus –bus mall, lighting at transfers, length of transfer wait, shelters), increase ridership (especially at night), promote responsible liquor consumption (collaboration between Transit, SGI and police), training manual for language barriers, public awareness campaigns (clear policy posted on busses), silent panic buttons/video cameras/if not enough video cameras then have “safety zone”, follow-up from complaints.
- Ask for more data on how the text app works (as they have in Vancouver) – on-time crisis management
- Acknowledging difference between espoused and enacted mission. We need to know that Transit’s mission is being enacted – need to measure safety so that we/they know what is/isn’t working
- Finalised report will be taken to Transit to go together to present to Council Standing Policy Committee

- We need to discuss how “activist” we want the language to be
- We need to have communication as a group
  - Wes motions that Josie, Mylene, Jeff, Cam and Mairi form committee to move it into a communications plan, to move discussion on today.
- Timeline? We will aim to propose this in a month. Cam will discuss with Transit before it is proposed so that they are given time to prepare.
  - Do not want to scare people away from Transit, so we need to be careful about how this information is presented.

**b. Public Transit Fund and Infrastructure Bank announcement**

- 15 billion was supposed to go to Public Infrastructure Bank, but would go to projects where there was a revenue stream, so transit would be excluded.
  - Sheri Benson, MP confirmed this was true
- Minister of Finance, Minister of Infrastructure would be who we send letters to. Also, Ralph Goodale’s office, as only Liberal MP in Saskatchewan. Do we want to send a letter as Bus Riders about our concern that money be de-railed from Transit? Yes. It would be helpful to get lobbying going. We can also send it to opposition parties, so that there is more attention to it.
- Robert volunteers to go through papers and draft a letter.

**c. Social Planning Councils**

- Form to join various groups with similar mandates but different issues
- Social progressive mirror to Chamber of Commerce
- Can provide continuous research, resource, face/continuity to decision-makers – not a directorial group
- Wes is looking for opinion on forming one, and is in beginning stages of figuring out organising one

- Josie is familiar with Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) model, and there are several successful student-run PIRGs across the country.
  - Josie says City has some sort of responsibility for this – Wes agrees, but says there should be independence from the City because some groups' actions may be against the City.
  - This is an interesting opportunity for groups like Bus Riders of Saskatoon, Saskatoon Cycles, and Council for Aging to be united more regularly than just in election times.
- d. Transit's Fare Review in January 2017 (item forwarded from prior meeting. Not discussed at today's meeting due to time constraints)
- Does BRS have an official opinion, before the fact, on the fare review scheduled for January? Do we want to approach SPC-Transportation (or Council) after the review has been submitted?
- e. Neighbourhood Traffic Safety Reviews
- Does BRS want to put together a comprehensive strategy, perhaps in conjunction with Saskatoon Cycles, to influence the several Neighbourhood Traffic Safety Reviews that the City is undertaking starting in April? If so, who should take the lead and who wants to participate in the actual reviews or in preparing the strategy?
    - 11 neighbourhoods selected for safety reviews in April.
    - Nothing on transit in these reviews, little on pedestrian safety, but Peter proposes these are important questions to map.
    - Peter proposes we get involved in these discussions to get these on the agenda, wants to put together a small group to attend the neighbourhood meetings, potentially in conjunction with Saskatoon Cycles
    - One coming up on Jan 17 in Sutherland
    - Wes proposes we get in touch with community associations because they are active groups with good reputations

- Peter suggests we go as individuals to these talks to question transit and pedestrian safety – to change process from individual issues to system issues
- Suggestion that Peter, Katya and Lila do research, develop an effective approach and formulate generic questions that a BRS-member could use at any/all of the neighbourhood traffic safety reviews; and that they keep track of and inform about meeting dates and times (in April); and then propose on our Facebook page that people in the neighbourhoods go to the meetings.

f. *Let's Talk Trends*: Saskatoon City Council and Strategic Planning public discussion

- Cam, Lila and Peter will be at the meeting tomorrow evening

g. Standing Policy Committee on Transportation meeting update

- Nothing pertinent to Transit

h. Access Transit – Accessibility Advisory meeting update

- Robert attended meeting on Friday
- Manager of Access Transit was not in attendance and his rep could not give report
- Members of City staff have right to vote as advisory committee, but cannot go to media. We have more influence, fi there was an advisory committee.
- Cleaning of snow around bus stops was discussed
- Bus drivers calling out bus stops
- Unsure whether we take up Access as part of our mission. Transit says it would be helpful if we did have a working relationship with Access – put them on our contact list and discuss issues when there is cross-over.
- Robert proposes that we ask on Facebook if anyone has stories about Access Transit to take to our Transit meetings

i. Determine date and facilitators for next meeting

- February 12, 2017
- Cam will facilitate, Lila as alternate
- Meeting adjourned 3:35pm.