

Minutes for BRS-Transit meeting
Tuesday, 23 April 2019 @ 3:30-4:30pm

Location: Committee Room B at City Hall

Present: Cory Shrigley, Allison Gray from Transit; Brent Kobes, Jamie Bell from USSU; Peter Gallén, Robert Clipperton, Curtis McCoshen from BRS.

MEETING ADMINISTRATION

- 1) Curtis was appointed Chair of this meeting, while Peter will provide the minutes.

USSU ITEMS

- 2) New USSU representative:
 - a. Brent Kobes' term as VP Operations & Finance for USSU comes to an end this month and his place on this committee will be taken by Jamie Bell, who was elected to that position in March. Both Brent and Jamie were present at this meeting to facilitate the transition.
 - b. Brent has prepared a binder for the VP to assist with the work on this committee.
- 3) Court case that might have implications for the U-Pass program:
 - a. USSU informed us that a case is before the courts that challenges the right of student unions to impose compulsory, non-education related charges to student fees. The outcome of this court case may have negative implications for the U-Pass program.
 - b. Apparently the Provincial Minister of Advanced Education has not shown any interest in intervening in this case.
- 4) Changes to U-Start:
 - a. Transit regretted that they will no longer be allowed to participate in the very successful U-Start program. Transit information will still be available at the event from the Ambassadors, but there will no longer be a bus on site to provide hands-on instruction in taking transit.

BRS ITEMS

- 5) Inconsiderate Riders:
 - a. Blocking the isle in the bus:
 - i. Transit was informed that the issue of riders blocking the isle and refusing to move further back in the bus has been brought up on our FB-page.
 - ii. One commentator mentioned that Operators in Ottawa refuse to move the bus until riders comply with the request to move further back.
 - iii. Transit will review their Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) and report back.
 - b. Reserved seats at the Front of the Bus:
 - i. Transit was informed that commentators on our FB-page have noticed that students in particular seem reluctant to vacate the reserved seats at the front of the bus.

- ii. A discussion followed regarding potential remedies:
 - 1. When potential posters in the bus were brought up we were informed that the overhead poster space in all buses has been sold to an outside agency for rental to third parties; Transit would have to pay for the use of such space (even though the space may currently be unoccupied).
 - 2. Transit promised to look into remedies for the reserved seats.
- 6) Safe Bus follow-up:
 - a. See February minutes.
- 7) Service issues:
 - a. Route 11:
 - i. Complaints have died down and the service now seems to operate as intended.
 - b. 'Cancelled service'- alerts:
 - i. BRS informed Transit that they have received several 'cancelled service'- alerts from Transit App on various routes in the last month citing 'mechanical problems' or 'bus shortages'.
 - ii. Transit informed us that the availability of buses is somewhat tight at the moment, but noted that their annual replacement of buses is working as intended; the tight supply is a direct result of a number of buses having been sent to Ontario for refurbishing (an 8 month procedure that will return the buses in time for the September rush), but also a result of the substantial increase in ridership.
 - c. Route 26:
 - i. Transit informed us that the complaint on our FB-page regarding a missed transfer at Place Riel was due to an individual incident, where the bus was indeed 9 minutes late arriving at University Terminal.
 - ii. To provide general improvements to route 26, an additional bus will start running loops in September during the morning rush on this well-used route.
 - d. Annual route/schedule changes on July 1:
 - i. No major changes are to be expected on July 1 this year, although minor changes in the dates for Operator 'bids' have already been introduced to better align with the critical July and September periods.

TRANSIT ITEMS

- 8) Media Campaign and Intervener(s):
 - a. Transit recently issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to recruit a competent agency to conduct a marketing campaign. The local media got wind of the RFP and several media outlets seriously misrepresented the campaign and created a flurry of controversy on social media.
 - b. The facts about the campaign are as follows:
 - i. The campaign will start as soon as the contract has been signed on May 20.

- ii. The campaign will cost \$100,000 and run for 9 months, with a potential 12 month extension.
 - iii. The campaign will include elements of ‘experiential marketing’ and one or more ‘influencers’:
 - 1. The ‘experiential marketing’ may include highly visible stations in the community to provide opportunities for interaction with the public.
 - 2. There is no intention to hire a highly paid ‘celebrity influencer’ familiar from social media. Instead ‘micro influencers’ may be chosen by the agency that might include (even unpaid) students, senior citizens and other individuals to target select segments of the current and potential transit ridership.
- 9) Bloomberg-Harvard Team engagements with its outside Stakeholders:
 - a. The Chamber of Commerce will send out its next regular ‘eblast’ (mass email) to its members on Monday, April 22, which will include a few short survey-questions on the BRT and ways of further engagement.
 - b. Ways of engagement are being explored with the very diverse University community, which consists of university administration, faculty, staff and (undergraduate/graduate) students and each entity’s official union/association.
 - c. A transit Charette is planned as the engagement with BRS:
 - i. Transit will design a charette-type engagement with invited members of BRS and USSU.
 - ii. The charette will take place at City Hall on May 27 from 4:30pm to about 6:00 pm directly following our next regular meeting.
- 10) Transit’s 2018 Annual Report:
 - a. Transit informed the meeting that their 2018 Annual Report will be published in June.
 - b. The report is also expected to include plans for the upcoming year.
- 11) Fare Review:
 - a. Transit is hoping to hire a reseracher in September to compile ideas, best practises and background information for an upcoming fare review (to take place in 2020 at the earliest).
- 12) Service Standard Document:
 - a. Transit is finalizing a comprehensive Service Standard Document to be published by December.
 - b. BRS expressed an interest in taking a look at the draft document.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 27 May 2019, 3:30 – 4:30 pm at City Hall