

**Minutes for BRS-TRANSIT online meeting  
Monday, 27 February 2023 @ 1:30-2:30pm**

**LOCATION:** Online meeting using Zoom

**ATTENDANCE:**

- Saskatoon Transit (Transit):
  - Cory Shrigley, Customer Support & Engagement Manager
  - Allison Gray, Marketing Consultant
- Bus Riders of Saskatoon (BRS):
  - Robert Clipperton, Spokesperson and Steering Committee Member
  - Peter Gallén, Transit Co-ordinator and Steering Committee Member
  - Curt McCoshen, Steering Committee Member
  - Sherry Tarasoff, Steering Committee Member
  - James Wood, Steering Committee Member (joined late)

**ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

- For this meeting: Robert led the discussion and Peter prepared the minutes.

**OLD BUSINESS**

- 1) None was discussed.

**NEW BUSINESS**

The focus of this meeting was to discuss the purposes of our monthly meetings as Transit and BRS sees them, and the purpose and content of the meeting minutes.

- 2) Purpose of the MEETINGS:
  - a. Saskatoon Transit's response to the purpose of the Meetings:
    - i. Foster a transparent relationship.
    - ii. Provide and receive information in a timely manner.
    - iii. A conduit of information to the BRS membership and the public.
    - iv. Receive valuable feedback from a rider lens on different topics to help guide administrative decisions.
    - v. Work together to provide the best public transit system to residents of Saskatoon.
    - vi. Mutual respect of time, boundaries, and constraints.
  - b. Bus Rider's response to the purpose of the Meetings:
    - i. Bus Riders noted that since they are a citizens' advocacy group for 'Better Public Transit', they use three major avenues to do their advocacy work:
      1. Present to City Council and Committees, which is a very political public forum.
      2. Maintain a website and Facebook-group, which are BRS's main forums for their membership.

3. Cherish these monthly meetings with Saskatoon Transit, which provide a semi-private, recurring forum for in-depth dialog on what better transit might look like – both from Transit’s and the Riders’ point of view – and ways to achieve it in the short and longer term.
  - ii. Regarding the last point, Bus Riders have always appreciated the monthly meetings with Transit staff, the semi-annual meetings with the Transit Director, and the occasional meetings with other City staff and guest presenters.
  - iii. Utilizing insider information provided by Saskatoon Transit, BRS noted that they have been able to understand and explain to the public how a transit Agency thinks and provides its services to the Riders of Saskatoon by:
    1. Discussing in detail how particular aspects of our transit services work in practice.
    2. Discussing upcoming initiatives by our transit agency before they were implemented.
    3. Becoming informed about Industry Best Practises.
  - iv. And regarding information going in the other direction, BRS noted that they have been able to make Saskatoon Transit aware of concerns and aspirations from the perspective of the transit Users by:
    1. Providing and discussing Rider feedback (positive & negative).
    2. Pointing out potentially systemic/recurring issues in schedules and services on routes.
    3. Reviewing and critiquing Transit’s initiatives before they are implemented.
    4. Discussing current services – and lack thereof.
    5. Suggesting improvements – including raising the standards.
    6. Discussing any issue of interest or concern to either party.
  - v. When presenting to City Council/Committees – often in support of Saskatoon Transit’s initiatives – BRS has benefitted enormously from having had the facts plus a deep understanding of the issues (which, of course, were obtained through these regular dialogs with Saskatoon Transit).
  - vi. In summary, BRS has found these meetings to be an invaluable opportunity for experienced and knowledgeable Riders to engage in ongoing **dialog** with the service-providing transit Agency on all matters relating to transit in Saskatoon.
- 3) Purpose of the meeting MINUTES:
- a. Saskatoon Transit’s response to the purpose of the meeting Minutes:
    - i. Easy to read and provide a record without being a dialogue.
    - ii. Focus on the topics discussed, key decisions and action items.
    - iii. No personal observations or judgemental comments; all statements should reflect the facts.
    - iv. Avoid writing down everything said in a dialogue.
    - v. The minutes should be concise and summarize the major points.

- b. Bus Rider's response to the purpose of the meeting Minutes:
    - i. Use the publicly posted minutes to provide context and inform both Bus Rider's membership that was not present at the meeting and the public about the ins-and-outs of transit services and operations as learned through the dialog at the meetings (plus augmented by additional clarifications as required).
    - ii. Consequently:
      - 1. It means that (portions of) the minutes might get rather lengthy, because some issues are complex.
      - 2. It also means that there will at times be contradicting views between Saskatoon Transit and Bus Riders and those differences of opinion need to come across clearly in the minutes.
    - iii. Bus Riders emphasized that it is essential that the minutes be mutually approved by both Saskatoon Transit and Bus Riders in order to:
      - 1. Get the facts right:
        - a. While providing a useful forum for their membership, Bus Rider noted that their Facebook-page is a jumble of good information, partial truths, insightful commentary, serious or spurious accusations, and often simple misunderstandings. By bringing some of these issues to Saskatoon Transit's attention, Bus Rider has been able to get the issue explained and the facts corrected for subsequent posting in the minutes and on Facebook.
        - b. Moreover while notes are being taken at the meetings, subtle points are often missed, misunderstandings creep in and details are mis-recorded, which makes it invaluable to have the draft minutes that Bus Riders prepares reviewed, corrected and approved by Saskatoon Transit before posting.
      - 2. Build mutual trust:
        - a. Since sensitive topics are discussed from time to time, it is imperative for maintaining mutual trust that the published content is vetted by both parties before posting in a public forum.
- 4) Next meeting: Presentation of KPIs by Transit's current Johnson-Shoyama intern.

**NEXT MEETING:** Monday, 27 March 2023 @ 1:30am via Zoom