

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

ATTENDANCE:

- Saskatoon Transit (Transit):
 - Cory Shrigley, Customer Support & Engagement Manager
 - Amanda Lindgren, Engagement Consultant
 - Jim Puffalt, Transit Director
- Bus Riders of Saskatoon (BRS):
 - Robert Clipperton, Spokesperson and Steering Committee Member
 - Peter Gallén, Transit Co-ordinator and Steering Committee Member
 - James Wood, Steering Committee Member

ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES

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

OLD BUSINESS

- 1) Amanda noted that consultations on Transit Detour Alerts & Signage are continuing.

NEW BUSINESS

The recently appointed Transit Director, Jim Puffalt, was the featured guest of this meeting.

- 2) Introductions:
 - a. Robert Clipperton, BRS's official Spokesperson, began the meeting by introducing the history, purpose and aspirations of Bus Riders of Saskatoon:
 - i. Robert also noted BRS's website, where meeting minutes and other information is stored, and he highlighted BRS's Facebook Group, where a lively debate of transit issues and current concerns takes place by BRS's membership of 1600.
 - b. Jim Puffalt then provided background on himself:
 - i. As mentioned at the last meeting, Jim started work on June 12.
 - ii. As former administrator of various municipalities in Saskatchewan and Manitoba and most lately city manager of North Battleford and Moose Jaw, Jim noted that he has no previous experience running a transit agency.
 - iii. Jim did not see his previous lack of transit experience as a detriment in any way, however. On the contrary, by providing fresh eyes on the running of a well-established and experienced transit agency, Jim actually saw it as an advantage.
 - iv. Jim explained that he is very excited about being able to dedicate his full time and attention to the leadership and management of a single department like Saskatoon Transit. He specifically noted that his past experience in running a multitude of municipal administrations has given him extensive experience in the management of people and systems. Now he will have the opportunity to apply those skills to Saskatoon Transit by delving deeply into the complexities of transit issues in order to provide exemplary transit services to the ridership.

- 3) Update on the City Budget deliberations:
 - a. Jim noted that his impression so far in Council's budget deliberations was that Transit's Operating Budget seemed to be safe from any major cuts while certain staff increases have been approved. He attributed that to Council seeing Transit as an essential service.
 - b. Regarding Transit's Capital Budget, Jim noted that:
 - i. Transit is expecting delivery of 2 electric buses and 8 diesel buses by the fourth quarter of 2024 (barring any unforeseen manufacturing delays).
 - ii. The number and timelines for additional electric or diesel buses has not been determined yet.
 - c. The next GPC-meeting containing transit budget issues will take place on August 15.
- 4) Transit Plans:
 - a. In response to a direct question, Transit replied that the 2022 Transit Annual Report will be published shortly.
 - b. And with the new Transit Director now in place, the next 5-year plan for Transit will be revised and finalized over the course of next year.
- 5) Discussion of aspirations:
 - a. Transit Director:
 - i. Jim mentioned a long list of transit services that he would like to see improved.
 - ii. On a personal note while riding Transit, Jim noted that the condition of some bus stops were a disgrace to the City and a detriment to riders using them.
 - b. Bus Riders:
 - i. Robert expressed the frustration that many potential service improvements that have been brought up and discussed in these monthly meetings never seem to get costed out and subsequently presented to Council for consideration. Consequently, there is a real dearth of good news regarding transit.
 - ii. Peter noted that there is currently no good forum(s) where Riders' needs and potential solutions could get identified and thoroughly discussed. Such issues would of course then need to be listed, costed, and publicized before being broadly debated and finally prioritized.
 - iii. In conclusion, BRS was very pleased to hear that the Transit Director intends to participate as often as possible over the next year in these monthly meetings.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, 21 August 2023 @ 1:30am via Zoom.