

Meeting notes of the Comox Valley Transit Management Advisory Committee held on April 11, 2019 in the Comox Valley Regional District Boardroom located at 550B Comox Road, Courtenay, BC commencing at 10:05 am.

PRESENT:

M. Moore, Senior Manager, Government Relations	BC Transit
A. McMullen, Senior Transit Planner via teleconference	BC Transit
E. Kunderman, Regional Transit Manager, Operations	BC Transit
C. Miller, Engineering Technologist	City of Courtenay
R. Crisfield, Manager of Operations	Village of Cumberland
D. Richards, General Manager	Watson & Ash
M. Zbarsky, Manager of Transit and Sustainability	CVRD
L. Dennis, Legislative Services Assistant	CVRD

ITEMS

Management Report

The committee reviewed the management report

BC Transit Corporate Update

2019/20 Annual Operating Agreements are being finalized and will be sent to CVRD staff in the next couple weeks.

Registration is open for the BC Transit workshop to be held June 3-6, 2019 in Kamloops. CVRD staff will be attending.

BC Transit staff are heading into the next strategic planning cycle for the 10 year horizon. A survey will be sent out to all municipal partners, and this will be a topic presented at the upcoming workshop.

BC Transit will be looking at more robust fare payment technologies, like a tap system with a phone or prepaid card. This project will go out for RFP shortly and will start with a pilot project in Nanaimo and Victoria by summer 2020, with full implementation by 2022. BC Transit will be in touch soon to review the fare structure and technology options for the Comox Valley system.

There is a move province-wide to install full driver doors to prevent assaults. More information will be forthcoming.

There is nothing further to report on an inter-regional corridor bus. The issue will be discussed at the upcoming Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities AGM. The Regional District of Nanaimo and Cowichan will likely be the first communities to consider it but BC Transit staff will hear from the CAOs and politicians at the AVICC meeting.

Community Bus 21/22 Improvements

A. McMullen provided an overview of the report regarding redesign options for 21 Cape Lazo/Point Holmes and 22 Hubbard/Seal Bay. The report proposes options to redesign the route to increase ridership. This on-demand service has seen low uptake and is often sent as supplementary to handyDART, so could reduce handyDART service if removed from that function.

The preferred option for this route is the flex route option whereby the bus may deviate a certain distance from a scheduled route for pickup. This option will include signage and bus stops in order to establish a presence in the area.

The consensus of the committee was to recommend the flex-route option with two-day a week service. Staff will present the report to the CVRD Board in May 2019, conduct consultation as per the new routes policy, with the service to be implemented next year.

Transit 101 to April Committee of the Whole Update

BC Transit staff will present a detailed overview of transit to the CVRD Committee of the Whole in April 2019. BC Transit staff reviewed their PowerPoint presentation with the committee.

Custom Transit Services Initiatives

E. Kunderman outlined the travel training program initiatives aimed at moving some customers from handyDART service into conventional transit by providing travel training and assistance. Watson & Ash have done information sessions at various seniors facilities previously, and inquired whether CVRD staff would be available to conduct another session.

1,500 hour handyDART Expansion

The committee discussed the allocation of the 1,500 expansion hours for handyDART approved last year. The hours have been allocated to Saturday and Sunday service and more funds, approximately \$10,000, will be budgeted to the taxi supplement program to address peak service demand. Staff will confirm with the Committee of the Whole in May that the board approves of this direction.

2020/21-2022/23 Transit Improvement Program (TIP)

A. McMullen outlined the proposed system expansions over the next 3 years and explained that the goal of next year's conventional expansion is to fill some of the gaps that were identified last fall, but had not yet been addressed including evening service and the routes in West Courtenay as well as some additional FTN improvements. Some FTN route run times may be improved which could result in increased frequency. The City of Courtenay is currently looking at some of its intersection technology and the committee discussed how traffic improvements such as queue jumper lanes should be considered at intersections as roadworks are upgraded. The MOU will need to go to the Committee of the Whole in May for a decision to proceed with securing provincial funding for the three-year expansion initiatives.

Transit Exchange Update

The committee discussed the need to have the exchange report completed to outline what improvements need to be made and to determine if current bay capacity is sufficient for future planned expansions. Any relocations of exchanges to accommodate growth will take time to implement, so staff will need to talk to partners in Courtenay and North Island College as soon as possible, and the exchange report is required to articulate those needs. Seating and protection from rain are a priority and an agreement between the city and Pattison to install some shelters may free up some BC Transit shelters for use in other locations.

A. McMullen left the meeting at 12:01 pm.

Electric Bus Pilot Update

E. Kunderman advised that the report will be made available to the municipalities and operators in the next few weeks. Feedback on the buses has been positive so far and transit staff will work with BC Hydro on a charging strategy. This issue will be discussed further at the June workshop.

Draft Staff Report – Dantec Report

The Dantec Report will be presented to the Committee of the Whole on May 14, 2019. Members may provide feedback until the end of next week.

R. Crisfield left the meeting at 12:09 pm.

handyDART Pick Up/Drop Off Space

M. Zbarsky relayed a complaint regarding the lack of pick-up and drop-off spaces for the handyDART, and reminded members to consider access when reviewing certain development project applications (medical, adult daycare, etc).

Stakeholder Service/Project Updates

R. Crisfield reported that a contract for roads and utilities will be issued this week at the Village of Cumberland. Staff will work with Watson and Ash regarding possible road closures and route changes over the summer.

C. Miller will follow up with major roadworks likely to happen at the City of Courtenay now that the budget has been approved.

Next Meeting

The next Transit Management Advisory Committee meeting is scheduled for August 22, 2019 commencing at 10:00 am in the CVRD boardroom, 550B Comox Road, Courtenay. The committee discussed scheduling an earlier meeting in June. Staff will make arrangements.

The meeting terminated at 12:20 pm.

Recorded By:

Confirmed:

L. Dennis

M. Zbarsky

L. Dennis
Legislative Services Assistant

M. Zbarsky
Manager of Transit and Sustainability