

**March 28, 2007**

The Chairperson, Gary Russell, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

The following committee members were present: Gary Russell (Chairperson) Lynn DeMont (Vice-Chairperson), Todd Hacquoil (Acting Secretary), Peggy Brown, Lynn Eyland, Bill Moffatt, Gwen MacLachlan, Cathy Cranidge, Councillor Gary Meade and Larry Hilton (Supervisor Access-A-Bus).

Regrets were received from Marcia Guy (Secretary), Shauna MacEachern, Catherine Macintosh and Murray Holman.

The minutes of February 28, 2007 were approved as circulated by Gwen MacLachlan. Seconded by Peggy Brown.

The Order of Business was approved with the addition of item 12.8 Terms of Reference.

#### CONSIDERATION OF DEFERRED BUSINESS.

1. Attendance at Meetings - Gary R. reminded committee members of the attendance policy for ATAC, the same policy that is used for all committee's within HRM, including Council. No member shall miss more than three (3) consecutive meetings, without special permission, or their seat shall be declared vacant, at the discretion of the ATAC.
2. Clarification Of Complaints at 490-4000 - Larry informed the committee that the problem has been clarified, and he is receiving information through the 490-4000 phone number. Larry also informed the committee of changes made to the system that handles the complaints. Metro Transit now has approximately 4-6 business days to respond to a complainant, if the complainant requests a call back.
3. D435 Modifications - Todd stated that there are currently two types of tie down systems in place on the ALF service. The seat belt system, and a "J" hook system. With D435 the possibility exists for a third type of system. Todd asked if there was anyway to adopt one type of tie down system for all ALF. Larry will follow up.
4. Grandfather Clause - Larry is going to check the number of clients who are on grandfather clauses and the number of sites that are outside the current service area under grandfather clauses.
5. Eight Day Booking Window - Larry is tweaking the system to allow for the 8-day booking window. Discussion surrounded when the best time to announce this change would be and whether to include the information in the Annual Meeting Mail Out, or to announce it at the AGM. Potentially July 1st is the date to change to the 8-day booking window.
6. DIAL & ATAC Workshop - Larry is working with DIAL to set up some dates for these workshops. The workshops will be used to educate new AAB clients about the rules and how to use AAB and ALF bus services.

7. Driver Attitudes - Larry has sent a letter to AAB drivers advising them of the professional conduct that they must maintain with clients, in relation to the drivers personal life and complaints with their job. ALF drivers will be advised of the proper handling of wheelchair clients in the near future.

8. Criteria For Special Bookings - Larry and Terri have access to up to date information on specialists. The issue about clinics and some procedures that are not necessarily ordered by a specialist, but take time to get into, was discussed. Clients may receive their bookings well in advance (i.e. seating clinics, prosthetics, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, MRI's, etc.) Larry will get back to the committee on this.

9. Communications Problems - The question surrounding communication to AAB clients was raised. At one point information was issued through the phone system while clients were on hold, now they hear music. It was asked if there was a way to get information back onto the phone system. Larry will look into this possibility, but is not sure if it is possible after the move to the new AAB facilities.

10. Wait List - Larry informed the committees that the wait lists are still growing, but he is working on ways to streamline some of the services offered by Metro Transit and hopes to make improvements. At this point, a detailed discussion surrounding eligibility criteria ensued. Several viewpoints were raised, many of which will need to be addressed in the near future.

Correspondence In - None

Correspondence Out – Two cards were circulated for members of the committee to sign. Get Well card for Marcia Guy and a Baby Congratulations for Shauna MacEachern.

## REPORTS

### 10.1 Committees:

1. Low Floor Sub-Committee - Todd handed out copies of the cover letters sent to Larry and Paul along with the Low Floor Sub-Committees report and recommendations.

2. Public Relations Sub-Committee - Lynn handed out a report from the PR Committee, they are planning a BBQ for August 2008, and are actively planning this event

3. No-Show / Cancellation Sub-Committee - It appears that things are once again moving forward, a number of warning letters have been sent out, and Larry has phoned a number of clients who have been habitually breaking the No-Show / Late Cancellation Policy, and informed them that they are on a short leash.

10.2 Transit Services - not available at this meeting. It will be available next month.

## ADDED ITEMS -

1. Persons With Disabilities Presentation - Gary R. and Larry briefed the committee on the meeting that took place with the HRM Persons With Disabilities Meeting. Larry gave his PowerPoint presentation and lots of questions were asked. Both Larry and Gary R. felt this was a productive session.

2. FRED (Free Rides Everywhere Downtown) - Todd inquired if FRED is going to be ALF this year. Larry checked to see if the contract had been signed or negotiations had taken place with the Halifax Downtown Business Commission, and at this point no contract or negotiations have taken place for 2007. Another issue with FRED is that it is currently being used on ALF routes, and the drivers are refusing access to wheelchair clients due to the fact that the FRED logo covers the wheelchair signs on the exterior of the bus. Larry will address this issue.

3. AGM Reminder - Gary R. provided an outline of the annual report that he is working on and asked the committee if there was anything else they wished to be added.

4. Remarks From Jim Leadon – Deferred until Jim attends a meeting.

5. Door Prizes for AGM - Gary R. asked if there were any committee members who belonged to other organizations that wished to donate items for AGM door prizes. Lynn D. stated that DIAL might have some items.

6. Clarification of Priority for Bookings - Larry stated that the wait list continues to grow for AAB, and often it comes down to the time that the client books their trips, as to who gets a bus and who does not. Often this time frame is separated by a few minutes. The priority for bookings is: 1. Employment 2. Education 3. Medical 4. Recreation.  
Again a brief discussion surrounding Eligibility Criteria took place.

7. Drop Off / Pick Up Points At Shopping Centres - Larry is continuing to work on updating the list of drop off / pick up points at major AAB locations.

8. Terms of Reference - Todd asked Larry about the status of the TOR. The committee approved the TOR at the last meeting and a copy with the changes had been forwarded to Larry. Todd is hoping they will be finalized soon so that a copy will be available to viewing on the web. Larry hopes that Metro Transit would have the TOR reviewed by the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 3 p.m.

The next meeting will be held on April 25, 2007 at the HRM Finance Department. The AGM will be held on May 23, 2007, 7-9 p.m. at the Dartmouth North Community Centre.

## **April 25, 2007**

Gary Russell, Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m.

The following Committee Members and guests were present: Gary Russell (Chairperson), Lynn DeMont (Vice-Chair-Person), Peggy Brown, Todd Hacquoil (A/Secretary), Lynn Eyland, Murray Holman, Bill Moffatt, Catherine Macintosh, Gwen MacLachlan, Councillor Gary Meade (District 23), Larry Hilton (Supervisor Special Services), and Jim Leadon (ATU 508 Shop).  
Regrets were received from Marcia Guy (Secretary) and Shauna MacEachern.

The minutes from March 28, 2007 were approved by Murray Holman and seconded by Lynn DeMont.

The approval of the Order of Business and the approval of Additions to the Agenda were moved by Peggy Brown and Seconded by Gwen Maclachlan.

12.2 Pick Up Location Mic Mac Mall - After Hours	Todd
12.3 Jim Leadon Comments	
12.4 Advisory Committee Comments	Peggy
12.5 Bus Condition	Gwen
12.6 Job Junction	Lynn D.
12.7 Access Awareness Week	Larry

## REPORTS

### 10.1 Committees:

1. Low Floor Sub-Committee - Todd stated that he has not received any follow-up to his letter and report to Paul.
2. Public Relations Sub-Committee - Lynn stated that the next meeting for this committee would be in July, after the new committee members are elected, to see if there are any new members for the sub-committee.
3. No-Show / Cancellation Sub-Committee - Gary R. stated that nine warning letters were sent out and it appears that there will be suspensions for the month of May.

10.2 Transit Services - Larry handed out the statistics for the month of March. Discussion surrounded the number of clients not accommodated and the number of clients who are on the wait lists each day.

## ADDED ITEMS

1. AGM - Gary R. brought the committee up to speed on the AGM. It was suggested that the ballots for the elections be printed, that way there is no rush to handwrite the ballots once the nominations from the floor are received. Larry stated that Metro Transit has a small portable printer that can be connected his laptop computer. A discussion surrounded the process for non-user nominees; it was decided to put a designation beside non-user nominees to distinguish between user and non-user nominees.
2. Pick Up Location Mic Mac Mall after hours - Todd raised the issue that East Side Mario's is open later than the mall and has its own entrance (Sunday to Thursday until 11:00 p.m. and Friday and Saturday until midnight). The mall closes at 9:00 p.m., Monday to Saturday and at 5:00 p.m. Sundays, with no mall access shortly after that. If a client wishes to go to East Side Mario's after the mall closes or be picked up after the mall closes, the client would have to drive around the mall to get to East Side Mario's. Larry agreed that if a client wishes to go to East Side Mario's after the mall closes, they could be picked up or dropped off at East Side Mario's.

3. Jim Leadon Comments - Jim informed the committee that union negotiations are still ongoing and that HRM has applied for a conciliator. The union has been without a contract since August 31, 2006. Jim advised the committee that one of the drivers who is off due to an injury and unable to drive, will be working on a special project to compile a list of mobility aids that are available in the market place. Such as wheelchairs and scooters and their specifications (i.e. width, length, and other characteristics). This will be an ongoing project.

The BBQ that is being planned for 2008 will also coincide with the 100th Anniversary of the ATU. Jim suggested that maybe the AAB BBQ could somehow incorporate this event. The committee agreed. Lynn D. also asked if the union would be willing to contribute to help offset some of the cost of the BBQ by donating the proceeds of one of their casual days. Jim will look into this for 2007 and 2008.

4. Advisory Committee Comments - Peggy Brown asked if the HRM Committee For Persons With Disabilities has a confidentiality clause like ATAC. Gary R. and Gary M. believe this is the case. Peggy was concerned about some of the AAB issues that were raised.

5. Bus Conditions - Gwen raised a concern regarding the black lines that are on the roof of some of the Access-A-Buses. She was concerned that the lines might be mould or something harmful. Larry stated that the lines were caused by dirt falling from the beam that supports the roof of the bus. He has had one of the buses taken apart to look at this, and it appears to be caused by condensation and the movement of the buses. A sample has been taken and sent out for testing as a precaution.

6. Job Junction - Lynn D. advised the committee of Job Junction, a program for students in High School to let them know of programs out there to help them after they finish their secondary education. Lynn D. thought that it would be an excellent time to educate these students regarding AAB and ALF. The program takes place each April. The committee agreed along with Larry this would be a good program to get involved in.

7. Access Awareness Week - Larry asked the committee for volunteers for the Access Awareness Week display at Pier 21 on June 1, 2007 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. Gary R., Lynn D., Todd H., and Peggy B. volunteered to help Metro Transit with this display. Metro Transit will be busy with the upcoming CUTA conference and little time to help with this display.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

The next meeting will be the Annual General Meeting on May 23, 2007 at the Dartmouth North Community Centre from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.