



**Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA)
Meeting of the Board of Directors**

**Held on
Monday, April 25, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.
Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA)
1547 Merivale Road, Suite 300, Ottawa (Nepean)
Teleconference (Google Meet)**

REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

President/Chairperson: Joanne MacEwan

Directors: Camille Williams-Taylor
Tom D'Amico
Michael Carson
Lisa Schimmens
Wendy Hough
Cindy Simpson

Alternate: Jennifer Jennekens

Absent: Donna Blackburn

General Manager/C.A.O.: Vicky Kyriaco

Guest: Jeff Redmond, Controller

Recording Secretary: Laurie Frid, Customer Service and Executive Support Coordinator

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:31 p.m. with Joanne MacEwan in the Chair.

2. Land Acknowledgement

The Ottawa Student Transportation Authority respectfully acknowledges that we are located on the ancestral, traditional and unceded Indigenous territory of the Algonquin Peoples, on whose territory we learn, play and work.

3. Introductions

There were no trustees in attendance; therefore, no introductions were necessary.

3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None.

4. Approval of the Regular Session Agenda

**Moved by Tom D’Amico
Seconded by Cindy Simpson**

THAT the Regular Session agenda be approved. Motion Carried.

Public Delegations

There were no members of the public in attendance; therefore, no public delegations.

Regular Session Action Items

5. a) Confirmation of the Regular Session Minutes, March 28, 2022

**Moved by Cindy Simpson
Seconded by Wendy Hough**

THAT the Regular Session minutes of March 28, 2022 be approved. Motion Carried.

(b) Business Arising from the Regular Session Minutes, March 28, 2022

None.

6. 2022-2023 Budget

The 2022-2023 budget, as presented, is similar to what was brought forward in March 2022. As a result of the discussions held in March, a general contingency was incorporated, reducing projected expenses to minimize variances resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing driver shortage. The proposed budget assumes school will commence as normal in September 2022 and uses the 2022-2022 budget projections as a foundation for estimating purposes, then deducts the general contingency to estimate actual expenses.

The difficulty with this budget was noted as OSTA made significant changes to service this year (e.g., reconfigured routes, moving students to OC Transpo and small vehicles/vans). Next year, OSTA has eliminated 28 buses to maintain a comfortable service level; however, noting the uncertainty around service. The budget also includes \$2 million for cleaning; however, its continuation is unknown.

**Moved by Lisa Schimmens
Seconded by Michael Carson**

THAT the OSTA budget for the 2022/2023 year as presented, be approved. Motion Carried.

Regular Session Information Items

7. Long-Term Financial Forecast 2022/23 – 2025/26

Annually, OSTA prepares a long-term financial forecast in conjunction with the annual budget preparation. The forecast is built on the assumption that school starts as normal in September 2022, considers enrollment growth by both Member School Boards, and includes actual and projected economic increases over the next four years. OSTA noted the difficulty in planning for the years ahead, with the uncertainty of the ongoing pandemic and the ongoing driver shortage.

Questions were answered accordingly.

8. Operational Update

OSTA has seen improvements to its long-term cancellation list by continuing to find creative solutions and reconfigure the system to decrease the overall number of drivers needed. At present, there has been an increase in the number of short-term cancellations.

Communication continues through OSTA’s channels, including notifications on the transportation confirmation process, driver recruitment and retention, the Assistant General Manager posting, school active transportation and more.

OSTA staff are, once again, working in the office with COVID protocols in place. Staff development is in progress, with various social events planned.

Jeff Redmond adjourned the meeting (5:54 p.m.)

9. Driver Shortage Status Update

OSTA is experiencing driver stability with more drivers in training and fewer resigning. A total of 17 drivers participated in the OCSB School Bus Preparatory course.

OSTA continues its research on driver recruitment and retention. An exit survey, coordinated by Nanos Research, was distributed to approximately 560 individuals who showed interest through OSTA's driver recruitment webpage. OSTA hopes to learn of potential barriers throughout the application process, impressions of the job, and more. Subsequently, a driver of the future survey will be launched, with focus groups scheduled in late May.

OSTA hired Extension Marketing to complete an independent assessment of all driver recruitment tactics and activities. Their findings will be presented to OSTA and the large operators. Simultaneously, OSTA has finalized its recruitment campaign ads, now posted on Facebook.

OSTA has shown their appreciation for our drivers by sending them a \$10 Tim Horton's gift card. June 18th marks OSTA's Driver Appreciation Day.

10. Transportation Planning Update

Planning for 2022-2023 has begun while considering transportation confirmation decisions. There have been 44 thousand responses received online to date, with 830 students declining transportation. Currently, OSTA is working with student volunteers who are phoning families to record their transportation decisions. This work will continue for another week, followed by individual lists sent to the schools (the last attempt to capture a response).

OSTA is in discussion with OC Transpo regarding the reassignment of students for next year.

Questions were answered accordingly.

11. Bus Technology Update

An agreement for bus technology (e.g., stop-arm cameras, internal cameras, GPS) has been circulated, with a meeting held with the City of Ottawa. OSTA has been experiencing delays with the implementation of GPS on First Student’s fleet.

12. Strategic Plan: Graphic

OSTA's 2021-2023 strategic plan infographic was presented and has been circulated and posted online.

13. Long Range Agenda

- Financial report April 30, 2022
- Bylaw review

14. New Business, Regular Session

The Board briefly discussed conversations being had in regards to masking on buses. It was noted that further discussions will take place, as necessary.

15. Board Meeting Schedule: 5:30 p.m. start time:

Future Board Meeting Dates:
May 30, 2022
June 29, 2022*
August 22, 2022

* indicates optional meeting dates, dependant on agenda requirements.

12. Adjournment of the Regular Session

Moved by Cindy Simpson
Seconded by Lisa Schimmens

THAT the Regular Session meeting adjourn at 6:21 p.m. Motion Carried.

Signature

Title

Signature

Title