



Victoria County Transit (VCT)
October 4, 2022

A meeting of Victoria County Transit was held in Council Chambers in Baddeck on October 4, 2022, at 11:30pm with Councillor MacLeod in the Chair.

Present Were:

District #2- Perla MacLeod

District #3- Bruce Morrison, Warden

District #5- Fraser Patterson

District #6 – Larry Dauphinee, Deputy Warden

Also present were:

Allan Bragg, Manager of Accounting

Keegan Campbell, Transit Administrator

Stephanie MacLeod, Recorder

Cassandra Yonder, Senior Safety

Councillor MacLeod opened the meeting and presented the Agenda for October 4, 2022, for approval.

It was moved by Warden Morrison and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that the Agenda for October 4, 2022, be approved.

Motion carried.

Councillor MacLeod opened the meeting and presented the Minutes from April 11, 2022, for approval.

It was moved by Councillor MacDonald and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the Minutes for April 11, 2022, be approved.

Motion carried.



Victoria County Transit (VCT)
October 4, 2022

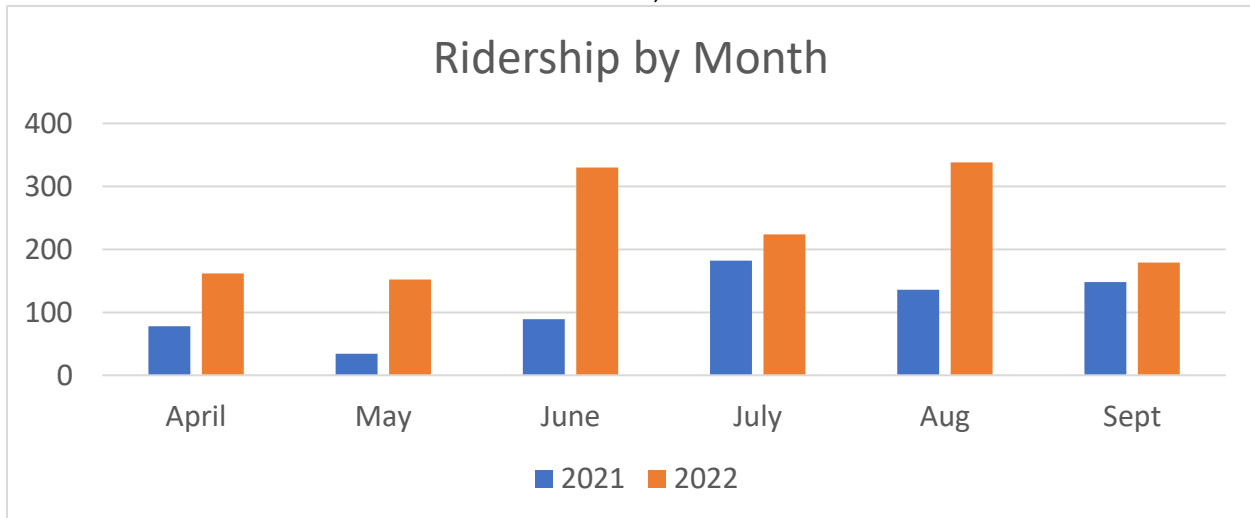
VCT Administrator Report (Keegan Campbell)

Statistics and ridership:

RANGE	O/W	FARE	SENIORS	DISABILITY	FAP
Apr – Jun 10 2022	741	\$8804	63	99	\$205

	Senior	Disability	Developmental	Accessible
July	21	31	26	1
August	26	42	35	1
September	16	26	23	0
Total	63	99	842	2

Victoria County Transit (VCT)
October 4, 2022



Recruitment Efforts:

- Since posting the advertisements to recruit new drivers we have received 30 applications.
- Of those 30, 20 currently lived in Cape Breton.
- Of those 20, 7 lived in Victoria County.
- Of those 7, 4 responded to interview requests.
- Of those 4, none were either eligible to drive, or willing to work part time/temporary. The wage was a non-starter for most.
- Not a single applicant from the North.
- Currently the driver north does not mind being the only driver up north, but this does result in a high amount of OT. We might want to consider switching to M-F for the off season to keep his hours down. We could just limit him to 5 days a week, not necessarily M-F if there were rides requested for the weekend.
- A driver south expects to be off for a few weeks to have work done to his knee. For this period, it might be best to have the other south driver work M-F as well, the weekends have slowed significantly in the past few weeks.

New Vehicle:

- Our funding request for a new vehicle is still pending, we will not know until the new year if it has been approved. Even then there is such a backlog of orders for ProMasters (which will only grow with the provinces release of funds) that it might be quite some until one becomes available.



Victoria County Transit (VCT)
October 4, 2022

- We might want to consider opting for a smaller, non-accessible van as our 3rd vehicle as they would be cheaper, easier to come by, and the accessible ramp is not used enough to warrant another vehicle in my opinion.

Warden Morrison and Councillor MacLeod both agreed with getting a smaller vehicle. Keegan is going to reach out to the province to confirm we can purchase a smaller vehicle if we get that funding that was applied for.

Fare Increase:

- In speaking with the Managers of other CTOs I have realised that our fares are the lowest in all of the RTA. Most, if not all, have increased their fares in the past year.
- I would propose a modest increase to \$7.50 flat rate within the county and \$0.75/km out of county fee, an increase of \$2.50 and \$0.25 respectively.
- If this would result in any customers not being able to afford their rides, we could use the FAP.
- The increase would need to be approved by the UARB, but none of the other CTOs had any issues.

Keegan said it needs to be applied for and approved by the UARB.

Councillor Patterson still wants to keep it at .55 cents not .75, Cassandra agrees with this as well.

Warden Morrison said it will be a tough argument to those people who don't use the service to see that we are losing money, so I agree with the \$7.50.

It was moved by Councillor Patterson and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the Victoria County Transit Board instructed Keegan to start work on the UARB proposal for the fare increase.

Motion Carried.

Fare Assistance Program (FAP):

- There have been 10 new signups for the fare assistance program in the past 7 months, up from zero.
- Of the 7 only 4 have actually used it.
- Only \$320 of the \$6937 has been used so far so there is lots of assistance available if we do increase fares and we will be making sure people are aware of the program.



Victoria County Transit (VCT)
October 4, 2022

Cassandra said that she has a hard time getting low-income residents to sign up for this because she's unsure of the limits of the FAP, can we have a policy and get an application process.

Councillor MacLeod said the province hasn't given us any policy around this.

Keegan said we seem to have to the opposite problem of any CTO in the province, every other one runs out of money, we don't use it up enough. Warden Morrison said maybe its because its so cheap at \$5 and Keegan agreed.

Deputy Warden Dauphinee said Doucette's store had to hire international students and they applied for the FAP and haven't heard back, and Keegan said he wanted to bring it to the Board since they are not full time Victoria County residents but without the FAP the students wont be able to stay working at Doucette's so Deputy Warden Dauphinee said, they should be approved.

CFO Redden said maybe we shouldn't be as discretionary, maybe we do lay it out more definitive to see if more people use it.

Warden Morrison suggested the CFO,

***On Motion of Warden Morrison and seconded by Councillor MacDonald that the CFO Redden, Keegan and Cassandra look at making a policy for the Fare Assistance Program.
Motion Carried.***

Dispatch Software Update:

- Narrowed potential providers to two, selection to be made this week.
- Negotiations with vendor should take 2-3 weeks, entering beta testing shortly after.
- Software will be customised to the needs of each organization; customization will add to rollout time. Full rollout expected within the early months of 2023.
- The potential vendors name will not be released until the contract is signed with NSCTN, who will be hosting the software for the RTA.
- Use of the software is mandatory for reporting purposes.

Funding Ask to the Province:

- Provincial budget is to be announced early next year, the RTA has been meeting to identify several areas wherein increased funding would benefit our CTOs. Examples include wages, vehicle repairs, insurance, and fuel costs.
- Our ask was significant and would greatly benefit VCT if approved.
- This is currently only a discussion with the province and as such this information should not be made public.



Victoria County Transit (VCT)
October 4, 2022

- We will not know if we were successful in securing additional funding until the Minister of Finance tables the Provincial budget in the spring.

CFO Redden asked if it went in collectively and Keegan said yes. Are wages consistent or all over the place and Keegan said its all over the place.

RTA/CTO Information:

- Some CTO board members have inquired about attending RTA meetings and reaching out to the RTA for information directly. When opportunities arise where it is felt that board members would benefit from attending an invitation will be sent. This is normally at our AGM.
- If a board member has any questions, they should be relayed to Keegan, and I will get the answer back promptly.

On Motion of Warden Morrison and seconded by Deputy Warden Dauphinee that the Chair will be the person who will attend any RTA meetings.

Motion Carried.

Districts 2 and 3 will cover the costs of the transit if any resident who would like to attend the Kilt walk next week.

CFO Redden asked if Victoria County Transit have insurance, an independent policy and Allan said its independent, its from Nordic and Keegan said its actually a good rate.

Manager Accounting Report / Update (Allan Bragg)

- Going to make a few tweaks to CTAP before I send it out to get it signed.
- Building 3 month actual and forecast for the year will be tweaked for the potential extra vehicle.
- With regard to “preliminary” financial data up to August 30th, it was noted income was \$38,968 and total expenses \$77,356 for a deficit of \$38,388. It was noted current year expenses include in-house dispatch (which was an expense not included in prior years). Cash balances at Aug 30th were \$59,002.
- Finally got access to the CRA accounts. Looks like there was a rebate declined but will look more into this.
- Bank account up north is still being set up.
- Letter out to Credit Union to move over any remaining funds to RBC.



Victoria County Transit (VCT)
October 4, 2022

Warden Morrison asked if at the end of the year, we are in the hole, does the province cover that and Allan said no they wont.

Councillor Patterson suggested getting testimonials, so it will be easier to justify if we are losing money.

Adjournment

Next meeting: December 5, 2022.