



OSTA

Ottawa Student
Transportation
Authority

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

**Held on
Monday, March 25, 2024 at 5:30 p.m.
Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA)
1547 Merivale Road, Suite 300, Ottawa (Nepean)**

REGULAR SESSION MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

President/Chairperson: Matthew Lee

Directors: Joanne MacEwan
Pino Buffone
Tom D'Amico
Lisa Schimmens
Randall Gerrior
Cindy Simpson
Lyra Evans

Alternate Director: None

Absent: None

Interim Operations Manager: Cindy Owens

Guests: Jeff Redmond, Controller, OSTA
Joel Lemieux, Incoming GM/CAO, OSTA

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

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m. with Matthew Lee 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 Anishnaabeg Algonquin Peoples, on whose territory we learn, play and work.

3. Declarations of Conflict of Interest

None.

4. Approval of the Regular Session Agenda

**Moved by Lyra Evans
Seconded by Joanne MacEwan**

THAT the Regular Session agenda be approved. Motion Carried.

5. Resolve In Camera

**Moved by Tom D'Amico
Seconded by Pino Buffone**

THAT the committee resolves In Camera. Motion Carried.

Return to Regular Session at 5:42 p.m. with Matthew Lee in the Chair.

Regular Session Action Items

6. a) Confirmation of the Regular Session Minutes, February 26, 2024

**Moved by Lyra Evans
Seconded by Pino Buffone**

THAT the Regular Session minutes of February 26, 2024 be approved. Motion Carried.

(b) Business Arising from the Regular Session Minutes, February 26, 2024

None.

7. Financial Update

Jeff Redmond, OSTA's Controller, presented the December 31, 2023, financial statements, including the forecast. The current statement presents a deficit in the forecast of \$1.7 million between the two Member School Boards (\$1.48 million for OCDSB; \$237 thousand for OCSB). This is largely due to the Ministry of Education's funding formula changes for fuel escalation/de-escalation. Currently, OSTA's operator contracts are based on the Ministry's old pegged fuel rate, and costs are estimated based on the current contractual obligations (from 93.6 cents/litre to \$1.50/litre). Positive fuel adjustments are no longer offset by additional revenues from the Ministry of Education funding until the new pegged price of \$1.50 per litre is reached.

The Driver Recruitment and Retention bonus was introduced this year and is overseen by OSTA. Previously, the Ministry of Education managed this program with a third party, who paid the bonus directly to the operators. OSTA has formal agreements with its operators and manages and distributes the funds. In September 2023, the bonus did not include vans; however, the Ministry of Education reversed that decision in January 2024. The forecast is currently based on funding provided by the Ministry of

Education. Variances may follow as the amounts are calculated based on the Ministry of Education's criteria.

Questions were answered accordingly.

**Moved by Lisa Schimmens
Seconded by Randall Gerrior**

THAT the OSTA Board of Directors receive the report Unaudited Financial Statements and Forecast for the 4 months ending December 31, 2023, as presented. Motion Carried.

Regular Session Information Items

8. Draft Budget Report/Discussion 2024-2025

A draft 2024-2025 budget was presented to the Board. The presented budget was built based on full enrollment, assuming there will be no driver shortages next year. The most recent routing simulation prepared for the Ministry of Education for funding was used as the foundation for the yellow bus fleet projections. Although 20-passenger vehicles were included in the simulation, those have since been removed due to lack of availability. This year, an \$800 thousand dollar expense was added for transportation initiatives targeting loading technologies. This has been reclassified to broaden the scope and carried forward into 2024-2025.

Jeff Redmond provided an overview of each page. The proposed budget shows an increase of \$9.2 million compared to 2023-2024. The key drivers include large vehicle expenditures increasing by \$4.2 million, which aligns with the economic increases provided to operators and projections made for those contracts currently under negotiation. Small vehicle costs have increased by \$586 thousand due to the economic increases built into the contracts. It is anticipated that enrollment growth for small vehicles will be offset by the movement of some students to buses. Public transit costs have increased by \$287 thousand, with utilization budgeted at the same level as the current year. It was noted that students 12 and under are provided free transit, which is included in the budget.

OSTA will continue working with the Member School Boards to refine the budget. Questions were answered accordingly.

9. Long Range Agenda

- The Public Governance Meeting is scheduled for April 2024.
- The 2024-2025 budget will be brought forward next month.

10. New Business, Regular Session

The OSTA Board welcomed Joel Lemieux, OSTA's incoming General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer. Joel introduced himself and highlighted his past experiences, which include a wealth of experience managing projects and people, attributed to his long tenure at OC Transpo.

The Board also thanked Cindy Owens, OSTA's Interim Operations Manager, for her dedication and hard work over the last six months. She was instrumental in making a positive change within the organization.

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

Future Board Meeting Dates:

April 29, 2024 – Public Meeting

May 27, 2024

June 26, 2024*

August 19, 2024

* indicates optional meeting dates, dependant on agenda requirements.

12. Adjournment of the Regular Session

Moved by Lyra Evans

Seconded by Tom D’Amico

THAT the Regular Session meeting adjourn at 6:50 p.m. Motion Carried.

Signature

Title

Signature

Title