

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

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**Held on  
Monday, March 31, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.  
Ottawa Student Transportation Authority (OSTA)  
1547 Merivale Road, Suite 300, Ottawa (Nepean)  
Virtual Meeting**

**REGULAR SESSION MINUTES**

**ATTENDANCE**

**President/Chairperson:** Joanne MacEwan

**Directors:** Pino Buffone  
Tom D'Amico  
Randall Gerrior  
Cindy Simpson  
Lyra Evans

**Alternate Director:** None

**Absent:** Matthew Lee  
Lisa Schimmens

**General Manager/C.A.O:** Stacey Kay

**Guests:** Lee Ann Grant, Assistant General Manager, OSTA  
Jeff Redmond, Controller, OSTA

**Recording Secretary:** Laurie Frid, Corporate Affairs Coordinator, OSTA

1. **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 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 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 Cindy Simpson  
Seconded by Randy Gerrior**

**THAT the Regular Session agenda be approved. Motion Carried.**

5. Resolve In Camera

**Moved by Lyra Evans  
Seconded by Tom D'Amico**

**THAT the committee resolves In Camera. Motion Carried.**

**Return to Regular Session at 5:46 p.m. with Joanne MacEwan in the Chair.**

**Regular Session Action Items**

6. a) Confirmation of the Regular Session Minutes, February 24, 2025

**Moved by Lyra Evans  
Seconded by Cindy Simpson**

**THAT the Regular Session minutes of February 24, 2025 be approved. Motion Carried.**

(b) Business Arising from the Regular Session Minutes, February 24, 2025

None.

7. Strategic Plan

The Board was reminded that at the previous meeting, the extension of the strategic plan was approved. Following this approval, the OSTA team developed an Operational Plan for the duration of the current strategic plan. This plan links activities to existing objectives and includes a new section on Corporate Enhancements.

To support both the Board and the OSTA team, the General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer reported on the process of engaging external expertise, with a focus on data-informed approaches. The General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer invited submissions from three outside firms and subsequently conducted interviews with each. The submissions, along with a high-level analysis, were provided to the Board.

The General Manager/CAO recommended Maximum City, citing their economical proposal, clear understanding of OSTA's needs, and experience within the transportation and education sectors. The

associated costs are within the approved 2024-2025 budget.

**Moved by Pino Buffone  
Seconded by Cindy Simpson**

**THAT the OSTA Board of Directors approve contracting with Maximum City to support the development of the next multi-year Strategic Plan 2026-2029. Motion Carried.**

### **Regular Session Information Items**

#### **8. Draft Budget 2025-2026**

A draft 2025-2026 budget was presented to the Board. The budget document includes a year-over-year comparison of the 2024-2025 forecast versus the 2025-2026 draft budget. The presented budget is based on the routing simulation submitted to the Ministry of Education in December 2024.

To develop interim revenue estimates for the Ministry's 2025-2026 funding, OSTA created a funding model using the 2024-2025 technical guide. The model relies on key assumptions, which pose potential risks if the 2025-2026 funding framework differs from the 2024-2025 framework. These assumptions include a 2% increase in the overall funding envelope compared to 2024-2025 and the alignment of public transit funding to fare costs.

Jeff Redmond provided an overview of each page. The proposed budget introduces 45 mini buses to OSTA's fleet, which is expected to reduce van costs. Each mini bus is projected to replace 2.4 vans, resulting in an approximate net savings of \$1 million. There is a budgetary risk that these projected savings may not be fully realized, particularly in the inaugural year. Further routing efficiencies are anticipated in subsequent years.

Other projections include a \$7.2 million increase in yellow bus transportation, primarily due to operator contract price increases, and a \$3.6 million decrease in van transportation resulting from the introduction of minibuses. Fuel escalation is projected to yield savings of \$760,000 due to the elimination of fuel escalation costs for yellow buses.

Public transit costs have increased by \$4.8 million. This increase is attributed to the City's decision to eliminate free transit for students 12 and under, and the youth fare pass, effective September 2025. Consequently, the annual cost of monthly fare passes will increase by 36%, from \$99.25 to \$135.

Questions were answered accordingly.

#### **9. Policies and Procedures**

As the Board is aware, a comprehensive Policy and Procedure review is currently underway. Last month marked a significant step forward with the Board's approval of Policy G15 – Policy Management.

A policy and procedure tracker will be presented to the Board quarterly. This tracker will outline policies scheduled for review, indicating whether proposed changes are minor (administrative) or require Board approval. It will also identify policies under review within each specific quarter. This spring, OSTA staff are reviewing several policies identified as vital to enabling OSTA to advance key strategic initiatives.

10. Operational Update

The Board received an operational update, which featured important initiatives, such as the implementation of the mini-bus vehicle class. A total of 45 mini buses will be incorporated into OSTA's fleet: 25 from Attridge Transportation and 20 from First Student.

OSTA has begun planning for the integration of this new vehicle class into the 2025-2026 school year. This includes transitioning students currently transported by van for logistical reasons to this new vehicle type. OSTA is also focused on identifying students in specialized programs. This process requires reviewing each student's individual needs to determine who would transition effectively. Ultimately, OSTA is creating strategies to reduce the number of vans and maximize the capacity of the 18-passenger mini-buses. While planning for this new vehicle type has required considerable effort, its strategic implementation is expected to optimize OSTA's resource utilization and reduce transportation costs.

The General Manager/Chief Administrative Officer noted that OSTA will present to the Principals of both Member Boards regarding expectations for the upcoming school year.

11. Long Range Agenda

- Operator Contract
- Strategic Plan Update
- OC Transpo Update (New Ways to Bus)
- Human Resources Matter

12. New Business, Regular Session

A request was made to share information with trustees regarding how OSTA determines hazards and how OSTA collaborates with the City of Ottawa on crossing guards.

The Board discussed the outcome of the Walking School Bus Program and OSTA's developments following its approval for reinstatement last fall. Following discussions with three school principals, issues were resolved with motorized vehicles and OSTA continues to advocate with the City of Ottawa for additional crossing guards.

Questions were answered accordingly.

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

Future Board Meeting Dates:

April 28, 2025 – Public Meeting  
May 26, 2025  
June 25, 2025\*  
August 18, 2025

\* indicates optional meeting dates, dependant on agenda requirements.

14. Adjournment of the Regular Session

**Moved by Lyra Evans**  
**Seconded by Cindy Simpson**

**THAT the Regular Session meeting adjourn at 6:14 p.m. Motion Carried.**

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Signature

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Title

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Signature

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Title