

COMMITTEE UPDATE

Title: April 2, 2024

Date: IMSA Board

Department: Committee of the Whole



UPDATE

The IMSA Board met on Wednesday, March 27th for its monthly Board meeting. This month's meeting included two major presentations (1) the Joint Regional Transportation Agency – JRTA – update and (2) presentation of the draft report from WSP re KTA.

1. JRTA presentation:

- a. The IMSA Board received an information report from the JRTA that outlines their work to date and future plans. For public information please see www.jrta.ca
- b. The JRTA covers 15 municipalities (HRT + 14 towns and rural municipalities generally from Bridgewater and Truro and out to Kentville).
- c. Their mandate covers all modes of transportation and is being done under the auspices of the Ministry of Public Works. Their vision is ...safe, efficient, equitable and resilient regional transportation for people and goods.
- d. They are working toward achieving net zero in transportation emissions and tying transit to affordable housing.
- e. They hope to have their plan complete by the end of 2024, at which time they will be able to begin implementation. Currently they are working through a process termed “scenario planning” <https://jrta.ca/regional-transportation-plan/> that uses current and projected data to identify potential scenarios based on current data rather than the more typical use of past data.

2. WSP/KTA presentation

- a. A draft (90% Complete) report was presented to the Board of the IMSA. A number of members of member councils as well as a few staff and two members of the public also watched the presentation.
- b. From the consultation processes the WSP team heard that current frequency is not sufficient, routes often cancelled, would like buses to run later in the evening and on Sundays; would like service extended to HRM, Windsor and Yarmouth.
- c. They have begun to work on a proposed governance and funding model.
- d. Preliminary directions are to increase the number of buses by 1, change the connection point, trim some routes; adjust frequencies inside and outside the core (Kentville to Wolfville); and add a new service to Canning.
- e. They still need to provide work on replacement schedule for buses, a cost benefit analysis for capital and operating and quantify GHG emissions reduction.
- f. The Board asked staff to bring back a report for the April 17th Board meeting that identified what buses are needed. KTA has received approximately \$13M for new E-buses. These take at least a year from order to delivery (perhaps more) the infrastructure for the E-Buses is also not in place. Current buses are literally losing parts

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and taken off routes. Understanding that KTA staff have been waiting to receive recommendations from the WSP study, and these have not been received as of this date, it was agreed by the Board that given the supply delay, a pending election and new Board members the current Board needed to have some better discussion on the situation.

3. Other Business

a. Valley Waste Audit Meeting

The VWMA audit will begin in Mid May and is planned for completion mid to late June report to the IMSA Board. The materiality being used for this audit is \$309,000. A few change within the organization have been identified as potential areas of risk for which the auditors will pay special attention. These include key personnel changes; new financial reporting system; changes for asset management related to the Chester landfill. The audit is being prepared by MNP Chartered Professional Accountants.

b. Kings Transit Audit Meeting

As with VWMA the KTA audit will begin in mid-May with a planned completion date of late June. Materiality being used for the audit is \$80,000. A \$4,000.00 threshold is being used for journal entries. Changes in the organization, a new inventory management system, a new accounting system and a changing payroll system are considered potential areas of risk and will be reviewed carefully. The KTA audit is being carried out by BDO Chartered Professional Accountants.

4. The VWMA compost contract has been reviewed and extended with the current service provider for an additional 6 years. VWMA Staff have been preparing options for the continuation of collection services until December 2025. A RFD will come to the Board in the very near future.
5. **RFD Process** – the Board approved an RFD process (similar to that used in the Town of Wolfville) for staff reports.
6. **MNP Update** – MNP staff provided a confidential report on their work to date on a cost model for VWMA. This document will largely be a staff tool to manage the cost of various waste streams. As it will have implications for chargebacks to municipalities the Board requested that at the next board meeting a summary synopsis of implications of a policy nature be provided.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mayor Donovan