
Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Robert Clipperton - Investigation of Service Disruptions in Saskatoon Transit - CK 1600-18 x 7300-1
Attachments: 22 11 07 Presentation to SPCOT - Auditor's Report.docx

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>

Sent: Sunday, November 6, 2022 9:09 PM

To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>

Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Robert Clipperton - Investigation of Service Disruptions in Saskatoon Transit - CK 1600-18 x 7300-1

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Sunday, November 6, 2022 - 21:08

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

Date: Sunday, November 06, 2022

To: His Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

First Name: Robert

Last Name: Clipperton

Phone Number : [306](tel:306) [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED] 9th St E

City: Saskatoon

Province: Saskatchewan

Postal Code: S7N [REDACTED]

Name of the organization or agency you are representing (if applicable): Bus Riders of Saskatoon

Subject: Agenda Item 7.1.2 Investigation of Service Disruptions in Saskatoon Transit [CK. 1600-18 x 7300-1]

Meeting (if known): Standing Policy Committee on Transportation - November 7th at 2:00 pm

Comments:

I would like to address the Committee in person on behalf of Bus Riders of Saskatoon.

Attachments:

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No

Bus Riders of Saskatoon – Presentation to the Standing Policy Committee on Transportation – November 7, 2022

Re: Agenda Item: 7.1.2 Investigation of Service Disruptions in Saskatoon Transit

Good Afternoon. My name is Robert Clipperton and I represent Bus Riders of Saskatoon. Thank you for the opportunity to address you today regarding the Auditor's Report. I would like to thank the members of the Committee as well for including Bus Riders in the list of stakeholders referred to in the terms of reference for the investigation. I would like to thank the City Auditor for meeting with us twice during the course of his investigations.

Although the report investigates the root causes of the service disruptions, we feel that perhaps the roots investigated weren't deep enough. Perhaps the bar for service has been set too low.

I must say that when the report mentioned the need to improve governance processes and the need to obtain accurate and timely data for informed decision making, I assumed that there would be recommendations as to the sorts of information that is presented to Council to allow them to make informed decisions. It is Council after all that approves the operating budget for Transit and capital expenditures such as for new buses. Bus Riders has long wondered why proposals to increase week-end service hours for example never get to the Council table for deliberation. We wonder why, when the asset management report presented to Council in August of 2021

predicted service disruptions, no measures came to Council for approval which might have prevented the situation we saw in the winter of 2022. These reflect governance processes and they go beyond management practices.

We were pleased to read that “Transit is an essential service that the City provides to its residents.” We don’t think that the service levels for our bus service would be tolerated in other essential services such as Saskatoon Light and Power or the Sewer and Water Utility.

We were pleased that the Auditor recognized that advance notice to riders of service disruptions needs to be earlier than a few hours in advance. Perhaps the worst example of this was the service alert that came out at 4:00 pm informing us that the 3:56 pm bus run was cancelled. You can’t run a service that is so close to the edge that there is not enough room in the system to accommodate traffic accidents and water main breaks let alone bus break-downs. All of these charts and graphs in the report are great but they obscure the human cost. The dead tired shift worker who gets off work in time to take that bus at 4:15 but learns that there won’t be a bus until 5:15. The single mother with two pre-schoolers who learns that they will have to wait another 30 minutes in the wind and cold. The person who misses their dental appointment due to a cancelled or late bus knowing that they will be charged for a missed appointment. The person who is threatened with dismissal if

they are late for work once again. The person who misses that specialist appointment that they have waited months for.

The report notes that “Transit deployed 84 buses everyday in the winter of 2021-22 but that in prior years the book out was 102 buses.” Why was there a cut in 18 buses? Do we find the answer in the complaints by riders that the bus they wanted to board was full? Do we find the answer in the drop in the planned number of monthly service hours by close to 3000 hours between March and September? The report doesn’t mention service frequency cuts from 30 to 40 minutes on some routes or routes that were shortened or amalgamated to try to offer a minimum of service with fewer buses. The report addresses service disruptions to a service that had already been cut back to try to deal with a shortage of resources to keep it operating.

We wonder if the report addresses maintenance of other than ‘fit to go on the road’ issues. Does it consider heat and air-conditioning that functions properly? Does it include accessibility components such as audible call outs for those with limited vision? Does it include working real time arrival information? Does it include fold-up benches that provide space for wheelchairs and strollers being in working order? Does it include cleanliness?

We do believe that Transit staff does the best they can with the resources they have but we don’t think those resources are

sufficient to provide an essential service. At Budget Time, please provide the resources recommended in the report.

To sum up... we think the bar is too low. An unreliable service is not acceptable. It wouldn't be for electricity. It wouldn't be for water. It shouldn't be for Transit.