TRANSPORT ACTION ATLANTIC

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday, June 15, 2024 13h00 AST

Via ZOOM

MINUTES

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Members and Guests Present:

Christine Mills-Garnet
Marcus Garnet
Ted Bartlett
Tim Hayman
Jim Roche
Allan MacDonald
John Cormier
Kurt Edmonds
Matt Pelletier
Ken Hart
Robert Boehner
Christoper Gosse
Don MacLeod
Mary Macpherson
Milne Hall

Regrets:

Tom Beckett
Yves Bourgeois
Ashley Morton
Justin Tinker
David Brake

14:05 - Call to order, introductions, regrets and opening Remarks by Tim Hayman, President of TAA.

Motion to approved the agenda moved by Milne Hall. Seconded by Ted Bartlett. Motion carried.

Motion to approve minutes as amended from previous meeting – Moved by Ted Bartlett. Seconded, Christine Mills Garnet. Motion approved.

14:15 - Business Arising:

No business arising

14: 20 Presidents Report

Tim provided an update on his role over this past year. Report attached (see Appendix 1)

14:25 Vice Presidents Report

Marcus provided an update on his activities as Vice President over this past year. Report attached (see Appendix 2).

14:30 Financial Report - Allan MacDonald

Allan provided an over view of the financial activities for 2023. Full financial report attached (see Appendix 3).

Motion to approve financial report. Moved by Ted Bartlett. Seconded by John Cormier. Motion carried.

Tim moved that TAA not appoint an auditor, as a financial audit would not be required for 2023/24. Seconded by Ted Bartlett. Motion carried.

14:45 Membership Report - Christine Mills Garnet

Christine advised that we currently have approximately 68 members in good standing. We had 4 renewals in the last week. Report attached (see Appendix 4). As a further breakdown of memberships by location, we have:

New Brunswick - 21

Nova Scotia - 29

Newfoundland - 7

Ontario - 3

PEI - 1

Quebec - 4

Vermont - 1

Rhode Island - 1

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14:50 Nomination and Election of Officers 2024 /25

Call for nomination from the floor. No Nominations from the floor.

The following slate of candidates are being put forward as Directors for the year 2024/25:

Tim Hayman - Halifax NS

Jim Roche - St. John's NL

David Brake - St. John's NL

Allan MacDonald - Antigonish NS

Ted Bartlett - Moncton NB

John Cormier - Charlottetown PEI

Mary Macpherson - Sydney NS

Marcus Garnet - Halifax NS

Christine Mills Garnet - Halifax NS

Ashley Morton - Halifax NS

Justin Tinker - St. John NB

Motion to accept proposed slate of candidates. Moved by Tim Hayman. Seconded by John Cormier. Motion carried.

15:00 Presentation of the John Pearce Award

Ted Bartlett announced that this year's John Pearce award would be awarded to the late Michael Perry. Michael was a long time participant in our organization and staunch promoter of transportation issues in our region.

15:15 New Business

Christopher Gosse of the Long Shoremen's Protective Union and Ken Hart of the Amalgamated Transit Workers Union of Newfoundland and Labrador introduced themselves to the group and provided an overview of their involvement in the transportation sector. It is their first time joining a TAA meeting and expressed desire to become members. Ted Bartlett reviewed the corporate membership policy and noted that TAA has never had a Union affiliate as part of our group but that we would be delighted to welcome them as a corporate member.

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Tim discussed the issue of our Bulletin publication. He solicited input from the membership with respect to how they would like to see it moving forward. Options to be considered would be do we want a digital or hard copy format, and whether there are other ways it could be reworked to become a manageable and useful publication. Time and resources are a challenge in this regard.

15:45 Meeting was adjourned at 15:45 by Tim Hayman following final remarks and general consensus to adjourn.

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Appendix 1

PRESIDENT'S REPORT - 15 June 2024

As we make our way well into 2024, it's hard to believe it's now been two years since I stepped into the role as president of Transport Action Atlantic. As I mentioned in my report last year, I knew that I had rather enormous shoes to fill, and I have continued to strive to live up to the high standards set by past president Ted Bartlett. Once again, I'd like to acknowledge his continued contributions since his retirement from the post, which have been invaluable in helping to keep the organization moving along. He continues to be an asset to the board in his now ex-officio capacity.

Again this year, I recognize that I haven't been able to accomplish some of the ambitious goals that I have tried to set for myself in this role. Time continues to be in short supply – a perpetual struggle for all of us who take on volunteer tasks, while other life priorities continue to compete for that time.

That said, as I reflect on the last year, I realize that we have indeed continued to maintain an active presence as public transportation advocates, with a variety of media engagements and an active presence both online and in person. Both I and other members of our board had opportunities to meet with politicians at the federal and municipal levels. Ted Bartlett and I travelled to Charlottetown to present the John Pearce Award to the premier of PEI, and had an excellent conversation with the premier and the head of Maritime Bus. Late in 2023, I had the opportunity to briefly meet the new president of VIA Rail Canada, and have continued to have ongoing dialogue with VIA about their services in the region.

Our largest and perhaps most important campaign of the last year was our advocacy for federal funding to replace VIA Rail's long distance, regional and remote train fleet, which is absolutely critical to the continued existence of any passenger rail services outside of the Quebec City-Windsor Corridor beyond 2035. Our efforts were rewarded with a commitment in the 2024 federal budget to fund this project, and we look forward to learning more about the scope of these plans. Rest assured, we will be seeking every opportunity to feed into this process and advocate for new equipment that will meet the needs of the travelling public in Atlantic Canada.

The federal budget also brought positive news in terms of at least a partial commitment to keeping Marine Atlantic ferry rates at a more affordable level, and the tireless work of our Newfoundland-based advocates is surely at least partially responsible for keeping this topic on the front burner.

Unfortunately, there continue to be many issues to be addressed. As a recent example, ever increasing slow orders through northern New Brunswick have forced VIA to once again

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extend the schedule of the already painfully slow *Ocean* service, making the trip longer than ever in an effort to maintain some semblance of on-time performance. We have managed to draw a good amount of attention to this recent schedule change, and calling for badly needed funding to finally upgrade this line will continue to be a major focus of our advocacy.

There is, of course, always more we could do, and it is my hope that we can continue to expand on our advocacy work wherever the opportunities arise; but we should continue to recognize and acknowledge the hard work that our board and our members continue to do. There remain many things to sort out moving forward to expand on our advocacy. Key to this will be a consideration of how we can better empower both our board members and our broader membership, to focus their energy on the issues that matter the most to them, whether by subject expertise or local interest. It seems to me that this is our best path towards success as an advocacy organization. I will also echo a message that was frequently at the forefront during Ted's time in this seat: to be successful, we need more active and willing volunteers who will contribute their time and expertise to the cause. If you or someone you know would like to take on a more active role in the organization, we would love to hear from you.

Our board met this morning as usual ahead of this AGM, and once again I'm extremely encouraged by the excellent ideas that have been brought forward for ways to focus and maintain momentum with our advocacy. We also continue to bounce around ideas for interesting and engaging events and activities, which I hope will give our members more opportunities to engage with the organization, as well as seeing greater value in their membership.

There is much work to do, but I continue to be optimistic about the future of TAA, and hopeful that this next year will see some of our more exciting ideas come to fruition. I would like to thank all of our members for your continued support, and for your ongoing commitment to TAA's cause.

-Tim Hayman

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Appendix 2

TRANSPORT ACTION ATLANTIC – VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT – JUNE 2024

I retired from Halifax Regional Municipality's Planning & Development department on May 1st, so I hope to be more active for Transport Action Atlantic in the coming months. While working for HRM I was involved with the Halifax Regional Plan and Integrated Mobility Plan, which helped set the stage for Transit Oriented Development (TOD), Bus Rapid Transit and fast ferry service. I also provided input to the Joint Regional Transportation Agency (JRTA) on innovative transit technology, including Very Light Rail (VLR), and prepared a discussion paper on the implications of autonomous driving.

In late April I attended the Transport Action Canada National Board Meeting and Annual General Meeting in person as the recording Secretary. I had the opportunity to ride both the Montreal REM sky train and the Ottawa Confederation Line LRT. The Montreal REM was far superior in smoothness, speed and station comfort, but inferior in inclusiveness due to monolingual directional signage and announcements. The REM seating was almost like an afterthought with hard plastic longitudinal benches. Ottawa's LRT was fully bilingual, and trains were far more comfortable with a choice of seating orientation, but stations were draughty and the ride quality was very poor and noisy on tight corners.

Traveling between Montreal and Ottawa I had the privilege of riding Via's new Venture trains, which I found spacious and smooth riding. The return trip was in Business Class, with single seats on one side with a small table between the seat and the window to keep my imaginary valuables. At-seat meal service was superb.

Between Montreal and Halifax I had a Renaissance sleeper cabin with shower. Ride quality was superb, the food in the dining car was good, and on-train staff were pleasant and helpful. Car attendants are frequently asked whether the dome car is coming back, but there seems to be little hope. There is a possibility that a Renaissance coach might be added for exclusive use of sleeping car passengers for lectures and other activities.

Early this month I prepared a response to an anti-Via editorial by the National Post to correct some errors and provide historical context. Unfortunately, the National Post comment editor did not even acknowledge receipt of my letter. Perhaps it could be published in the next Transport Action Atlantic newsletter.

In the coming months, I intend to follow the recently announced light rail study for the Sydney area and help draft some suggestions for Via Rail's recently announced long-distance fleet replacement. Closer to home, Christine and I will be watching how Halifax Transit users cope with the disruption to the Scotia Square downtown bus terminal pending the demolition of the Cogswell Interchange and construction of a new terminal further to the north. In the longer term, the fast ferry to Bedford will require demolition and replacement of the existing Halifax ferry terminal.

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As opportunities arise, I hope to provide input to other projects such as the Portland Street – Cole Harbour Road Functional Plan to include BRT, and the Joint Regional Transportation Agency's draft concept plan which will include towns and villages within 100 km of Halifax. So, there will be plenty to keep me engaged with Transport Action Atlantic and the future of public transportation in our region!

Marcus Garnet, MCIP, Vice President

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3:07 PM
2024-06-06
Accrual Basis

Transport Action Atlantic Society
Balance Sheet
As of 31 May 2024

	31 May 24
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	
TD Bank Account	8,164.56
Total Chequing/Savings	8,164.56
Other Current Assets	
HST Rebate Receivable	579.59
Total Other Current Assets	579.59
Total Current Assets	8,744.15
TOTAL ASSETS	**8,744.15**
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	7,692.45
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,348.05
Net Income	-296.35
Total Equity	8,744.15
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	**8,744.15**

3:11 PM
2024-06-06
Accrual Basis

Transport Action Atlantic Society
Profit & Loss
January through May 2024

	Jan - May 24
Income	
Donations - Canada Helps	350.00
Donations - TAA	45.00
Interest Revenue	1.86
Memberships - Canada Helps	290.00
Memberships - TAA	241.32
Total Income	928.18
Expense	
Bank Service Charges	3.00
Commissions - Canada Helps	26.80
Insurance	522.00
National Dues - Ottawa	345.00
Postage	283.50
Social Media Expense	44.23
Total Expense	1,224.53
Net Income	**-296.35**

Appendix 4 – Membership Report

Transport Action Atlantic

Membership Report

June 15th, 2024

We have approximately sixty-eight individual members in good standing. In addition, we have twelve Corporate Members...five are in good standing.

We have had four renewals in the last two weeks.

Here is a little break down of numbers and where Members are located:

New Brunswick	- 21
Nova Scotia	- 29
Newfoundland	- 7
Ontario	- 3
Prince Edward Island	- 1
Quebec	- 4
Vermont	- 1
Rhode Island	- 1

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Mills Garnet

Membership Secretary