



TRANSPORT ACTION ATLANTIC

Spring AGM Meeting 2025

Saturday, May 31, 2025 - 13h00 AST

Via ZOOM

MINUTES

Members and Guests Present:

Christine Mills-Garnet
Marcus Garnet
Ted Bartlett
Tim Hayman
Allan MacDonald
Kurt Edmunds
Don McLeod

Regrets

Tom Beckett
Yves Bourgeois
Ashley Morton
Justin Tinker
Jim Roche
David Brake
Mary MacPherson
Don Rowe

13:05 - Call to order, introductions, regrets and opening remarks by Tim Hayman

Motion to adopt draft agenda made by Tim Hayman, seconded by Allan MacDonald – Motion Carried.

Motion to approve minutes as amended from previous meeting – Moved acceptance - Tim Hayman. Seconded – Christine Mills Garnet. Motion approved.

13:10 **Presidents Report**

Tim provided an update on his role over this past year. Copy of report attached.

13:20 **Vice Presidents Report**

Marcus provided an update on his role as VP. Marcus Garnet provided an update on VIA Rail's rail car shortage, which will worsen as cars are withdrawn for rebuilding over the next decade, with no hope of reinstating the dome car due to bi-directional operation requirements and structural issues.

He reported attending Transport Action Canada's 2025 AGM in Kingston and participating in a Dartmouth waterfront plan workshop, where he advocated for retaining and celebrating the rail line's significance.

Marcus also discussed his role as recording secretary for the national board, his involvement with Quebec rail issues, and the need to consider more collaboration with other rail advocacy groups in Atlantic Canada.

13:35 **Financial Report - Allan MacDonald**

Allan provided a brief overview of the financial activities for 2024. Detailed notes / statements attached.

Motion to accept the financial report – Christine Mills- Garnet. Seconded by Ted Bartlett. Motion carried.

Tim explained that we are not required to appoint an Auditor as per our financial framework. Marcus moved the motion that we not appoint an auditor for the coming year, and seconded by Ted. Motion carried.

13:50 **Membership Report - Christine Mills Garnet**

Christine advised that we currently have approximately 62 members in good standing. As a further breakdown of memberships by location, we have:

New Brunswick -	20
Nova Scotia -	26
Newfoundland -	6
PEI -	3
Corporate -	12 (including Via Rail)
Others -	6

Motion to accept report moved by Ted and seconded by Allan. Motion carried.

Tim advised that Transport Action Canada has introduced a revision to its membership structure whereby they are offering a youth membership for individuals under 25 yrs for \$10. The intent is to boost membership. Tim is proposing that TAA also consider adopting this initiative as well.

Motion to move forward with this initiative – Tim Hayman. Seconded by Marcus.

Motion carried.

Tim outlined a list of Directors for coming year.

They include : Tim Hayman – Nova Scotia

Marcus Garnet –	Nova Scotia
Jim Roche –	Newfoundland & Labrador
Allan McDonald –	Nova Scotia
Christine Mills Garnet -	Nova Scotia
Ted Bartlett -	New Brunswick
Mary MacPherson -	Nova Scotia
Don McLeod -	Nova Scotia
Ashley Morton -	Nova Scotia
Justin Tinker –	New Brunswick
Don Rowe –	Nova Scotia

Tim asked for any further nomination. None being brought forward, Tim moved that the names listed be accepted as board members for the year 2025 / 26. Seconded by Ted Bartlett.

Motion carried.

14:10 **Round Table Discussion**

A roundtable discussion was convened to cover various transportation issues of interest throughout the region.

- Campobello Island Ferry Service

Justin advised that Gov of NB had allocated an extra \$186K to start the ferry service early this yr. Even with this overture there still remains a challenge for residents / tourists moving

to and from the island. The US border crossing option is not improving.

- Transit Ridership

Ted advised that he had a recent conversation with Mike Cassidy concerning public transportation in the region. Mike felt that growth in ridership could be attributed to people moving to the region from larger Canadian centers and the demand from the Canadian Immigration initiatives in our area. As far as Maritime Bus is concerned, Mike felt that he is approaching pre-covid numbers. He also suggested that if Gov wanted to further encourage public transit, it could look at eliminating HST from passenger bus fares.

Ted expressed his concern over the elimination of tolls on Halifax bridges and the Cobequid Pass. This was rather disappointing as it has only served to encourage vehicle usage in the area.

Ted proposed a motion that TAA supports the removal of HST on intercity passenger fare on both rail and bus. Motion seconded by Marcus. Motion carried.

- VIA Rail Maritime Service

Ted advised that VIA had been reluctant to provide any update with respect to its future plans for the Maritime service. He referenced an interview with Bob Johnston of Trains Magazine and Executive from VIA. In that interview they did advise that there 8 contractors interested in the tender to acquire new car design for the service. They have reduced the number of car types from 21 to 9 which could work on all service. It is not their intent to use the dome type on the Ocean service.

General discussion on the challenges of maintaining an adequate rail passenger service for the region.

- Tim motioned that we adjourn this meeting and reconvene to elect our new board. Motioned seconded by Marcus. Meeting was adjourned at 15:20.

Election of Officers.

The newly elected board convened after the conclusion of the AGM to elect the officers for 2025-26.

All current Board Members have agreed to remain on the Board for the coming year. Ted moved that all current officers be reappointed in their positions for 2025 / 26 period. Allan seconded the motion.

Motion carried.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

31 May 2025

As we come to our 2025 annual general meeting, we now mark three years since I took on the role of president of Transport Action Atlantic. Even with another year under my belt, I continue to recognize the challenges of keeping up the high standards set by past president Ted Bartlett; and once again, I must 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 our vice-president, Marcus, have continued to serve on the national board of Transport Action Canada, which has allowed TAA to remain an active voice in the overall national conversation. There is always more we could do, but we mustn't lose sight of the accomplishments that we continue to achieve, however small they may seem.

Our largest and perhaps most important campaign of the last year was the organization of a petition for federal funding to repair and improve the Newcastle Subdivision, the rail line through Northern New Brunswick whose deteriorating condition has forced progressive extensions of the Ocean's already slow schedule. Our petition, run in collaboration with Transport Action Canada, was a great success. We secured well over 500 signatures, with the vast majority of those from New Brunswick. We were also able to generate significant attention through communities along the line. The only disappointment with this story, unfortunately, is that our petition died on the order paper as parliament dissolved ahead of the 2025 election. As such, it will not be presented in parliament, and we face the daunting task of starting over from scratch. Nonetheless, we will seek ways to capitalize on that momentum and continue to make our case to the federal government.

Speaking of the federal election, this last cycle brought a new government with a number of new faces throughout our region, and a new set of priorities in Ottawa. The new government's focus on nation building projects and Canadian-built resilience seems to be potential fertile ground for the kinds of public transportation projects, particularly rail and marine, for which we continue to advocate. Over the coming months, we will be working to engage with members of parliament and relevant ministers to advocate for our agenda.

Notably, the Liberal election platform included promises to reduce both the tolls on the Confederation Bridge, and the ferry rates on both Northumberland Ferries and Marine Atlantic. This was a very welcome promise, and we must work to hold the government to account. We must not forget the much delayed and only partially fulfilled campaign promise of the Trudeau government to reduce Marine Atlantic's cost recovery targets. More affordable ferry rates have been one of our key campaigns, and we must ensure that these fare reductions come to fruition.

As always, there continue to be many issues to be addressed. VIA's Ocean service continues to move through the region at a glacial pace, and the state of the equipment and on board service

offering is not readily improving. We gather that VIA is set to celebrate the 120th anniversary of the Ocean service this summer – a year late, an apt metaphor for the train's typical performance – and we hope that this can provide an opportunity to shine a spotlight on how far the service has fallen, while also opening a discussion of how it could be improved moving into the future. Some sort of event is being planned in Halifax, and we hope this will provide an opportunity for an audience with VIA management and a chance to make our case for both near and long term service improvements. Let's focus on making this train something that can be successful and worth celebrating for many years to come.

There is 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. As always, 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.

One thing I would ask our members to think about is potential nominations for the John Pearce award. The John Pearce Award was created by TAA to commemorate the association's long-time former and founding president, who devoted more than 40 years to public transportation advocacy. It is awarded annually to an individual or group to recognize an outstanding contribution, consistent with Mr. Pearce's life-long passion. We are currently seeking a deserving recipient for the 2024 award, and I would encourage any of you with potential nominees to let us know by email.

Thinking of outstanding contributions to the cause, at this time I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge two of our departing board members. John Cormier, from Prince Edward Island, recently made the move to Ontario and has stepped aside from the board. John brought a wealth of experience and valuable perspectives from the island, and his contributions will be missed. On the other island further east, one of our Newfoundland board members – David Brake – has also stepped aside as he sets his sights on greener pastures across the Atlantic. David provided excellent support and perspectives from Newfoundland, as well as a valuable contribution to our communications and online activities, which were immensely appreciated.

We are pleased to be welcoming new faces to the board as well, but we continue to have vacancies and are always looking for new voices and perspectives to join our group. We are in particular need of representation through New Brunswick and in PEI, so if you know anyone in those areas who may be interested and willing, please do give them a nudge in our direction.

I continue to be encouraged by the 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. All of these things take time and energy that is often in short supply, and so I continue to welcome support to move these objectives forward.

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

Membership Report – May 31st, 2025

There are Ninety Members on our Membership List.

Sixty-Two Members are up-to-date up to six months. There are, however, two Anonymous donors who I cannot trace on Canada Helps.

We have Twelve Corporate Members, five of which are up-to-date.

Total Membership Total is Sixty-Nine.

By area, here is an approximate little break down:

Nova Scotia - 26

New Brunswick – 20

Newfoundland – 3

Prince Edward Island – 3

Other – 6

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Mills Garnet

Membership Secretary

7:28 PM

Transport Action Atlantic Society

2025-05-26

Balance Sheet

Accrual Basis

As of 31 December 2024

	31 Dec 24
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Chequing/Savings	
TD Bank Account	8,581.69
Total Chequing/Savings	8,581.69
Other Current Assets	
HST Rebate Receivable	611.27
Total Other Current Assets	611.27
Total Current Assets	9,192.96
TOTAL ASSETS	9,192.96
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	7,692.45
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,348.05
Net Income	152.46
Total Equity	9,192.96
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	9,192.96

7:30 PM

Transport Action Atlantic Society

2025-05-26

Profit & Loss

Accrual Basis

January through December 2024

	Jan - Dec 24
Income	
Donations - Canada Helps	1,233.70
Donations - TAA	135.00
Interest Revenue	3.83
Memberships - Canada Helps	500.00
Memberships - TAA	1,316.32
Total Income	3,188.85
Expense	
Bank Service Charges	6.00
Commissions - Canada Helps	66.10
Insurance	522.00
Miscellaneous	638.78
National Dues - Ottawa	585.00
Office Supplies	2.24
Postage	341.52
Social Media Expense	44.23
Travel and Meals	830.52
Total Expense	3,036.39
Net Income	152.46