

**REGIONAL TRANSPORT COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**MINUTES—FEBRUARY 3, 2025**  
**RICHIBUCTO @ 4:00 PM**

**1) CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair, Claudette Dupuis, welcomed the committee at 4:05 PM.

**2) ATTENDANCE**

Claudette Dupuis, Normand Maillet, Christel Robichaud, Jean-Charles Daigle, Ray Portugaliza, Roméo Bourque

Other attendees: Julie Bernard, Isabelle Godin, Marc Thibert

Absent: Shivran Siddhu

**3) DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**4) ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**2025-01TR**

It was moved by Normand Maillet, seconded by Jean-Charles Daigle, that the agenda be adopted as amended—addition of the item “Regional Transport Study” under new business.

Motion carried

**5) ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF DECEMBER 9, 2024**

**2025-02TR**

It was moved by Normand Maillet, seconded by Christel Robichaud, that the minutes be adopted as presented.

Motion carried

**6) DEPARTMENT UPDATE**

**a) New Member**

Roméo Bourque, Mayor of the Rural Community of Beausoleil, officially joins the committee today as a representative on the board of directors. Members take turns introducing themselves, and Isabelle gives a brief overview of how the committee operates.

## **b) Statistics**

Isabelle presents the updated statistics for the year 2024.

We currently have 32 volunteer drivers in the SIGTIC system—an increase of 2 new drivers since our last meeting. Efforts are underway to offer an information session in the Nouvelle-Arcadie region in winter 2025, and a promotional campaign to recruit drivers took place in the Baie-Sainte-Anne, Escuminac, and Hardwicke regions in November and December 2024.

We also have 467 registered clients in the SIGTIC system—an increase of 37 clients since the last meeting. There is a noticeable increase in demand for medical travel, likely due to the ongoing agreement between the KRSC and the Vitalité Health Network.

From January 1 to December 31, 2024, a total of 3,396 trips were made, with 13,582 stops and 315,162.5 km travelled. This represents a 45% increase compared to 2023, which was already a record year for the KRSC! Isabelle takes the opportunity to highlight the excellent work of the Transport Kent team and the flexibility of our volunteers, which has allowed KRSC to provide such a high-quality service to the community. Medical appointments remain the main reason for trips, followed by work and grocery shopping.

During this same period, 672 trips were cancelled—sometimes due to weather, illness, or rescheduled appointments. These figures are somewhat skewed, as the current system doesn't allow modifications to a trip; it must be cancelled and re-entered. The new platform will resolve this issue and give us an accurate picture of the number of cancellations.

## **c) Agreements**

Isabelle announces that a new meeting has taken place with the Horizon Health Network to try to establish the same type of agreement with them as was made with Vitalité—a pilot project for an amount of \$21,900—to relieve our clients of the financial burden that might prevent them from accessing the healthcare they truly need. The meeting was positive, and the representatives from Horizon with whom we spoke seemed open to supporting the service. We expect to hear back from them by the end of March.

On the side of discussions with Social Development to streamline the booking process for trips, everything is still in development. The Economic and Social Inclusion Society (ESIC) is now involved in this process, and we are working with both entities to find common ground.

Finally, the agreement between the KRSC and Global Windows has been terminated by the latter. The private company informed us in mid-January that they would now handle the transportation of their employees to work themselves. This agreement officially ended last Saturday, February 1, 2025. We will likely see a reduction in the number of work-related trips in future statistics due to this new reality. The impact on the KRSC is almost nonexistent. We were reimbursed the full amount paid to the driver. In fact, it will be one less headache to have to replace the driver assigned to that agreement when they were unavailable.

Roméo asks for clarification on how travel fees are applied and how the difference between what the client pays and what the drivers are reimbursed is covered. Isabelle explains the policy in place for client payments in cash and the rate of \$0.25/km. The balance comes from funds received from the provincial government through the Regional Service Support Fund (RSSF), from ESIC, from agreements like the one with Vitalité to cover a certain percentage of costs, and finally from contributions from the municipalities.

## **7) DISPATCH SERVICE**

### **a) Process Improvements**

With the statistics presented earlier, it became clear that our dispatch service needed to be available full-time, with as little interruption as possible. Julie now has an office assigned to her in Bouctouche and will only be handling reception on Fridays to replace Shelly. We hope that this way, the dispatch service will be more efficient, minimizing the exposure of sensitive information to other KRSC's clients and allowing our drivers to be booked in advance. However, it should be noted that many of our clients still call us at the last minute, which adds extra stress to the dispatch service.

We will also hire a student who will handle reception from May to August and assist Julie with dispatch tasks during busy periods, when she is working on reimbursing volunteers and to replace her during her absence. Drivers Normand and Claudette are pleased to hear this news and congratulate Julie for her perseverance during the past few intense months.

### **b) Blaise Transit Platform**

Testing has begun on the Blaise Transit Platform. The KRSC is still in the very early stages leading to the official transition. At the moment, there are still modifications to be made so that the platform meets our expectations. Once the issues are resolved, our team will undergo training on the platform, ensuring that at least four employees are able to use it so that service is not interrupted due to absences. We hope that by our next meeting, the platform will be officially operational. We expect the tests to be completed by May 2025.

## **8) UPDATE ON THE WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE VAN**

Marc Thibert provides an update on the accessible transport service. He shares that he also participated in an event with the New Brunswick Multicultural Council to assist in the transportation of families newly arrived in the region. This event, which took place on Saturday, January 25, allowed these families to participate in a day of activities and training on services offered in the region and on best practices for maintaining good mental health.

Roméo asks if Bien vieillir chez soi à Beausoleil is aware of this service. Isabelle confirms that she has had regular exchanges with members of the committee and has participated in their events twice to promote the service. The KRSC also provides them with brochures and other promotional materials for the service.

Roméo adds that the KRSC should look into acquiring a wheelchair and a walker to ensure comfortable transportation for clients. Marc mentions that this could be an excellent idea given the mobility difficulties some clients face, especially those using types of scooters that cannot be used on the van lift. Isabelle

states that she will inquire about the risks associated with providing such equipment, particularly in relation to insurance and the responsibility that comes with their use.

## **9) NEW BUSINESS**

### **a) Regional Transport Study**

The KRSC has allocated funds in the 2025 budget to conduct a regional transport study. A master's student from the University of Moncton, in partnership with a professor from UNB, Trevor Hanson, an expert in the field, will ensure the development of this study. We have also received funding from the Regional Development Corporation (RDC) for this initiative. The student started part-time work in winter 2025 to prepare forms and interviews for the study. They will be hired full-time from May 2025 until the end of August 2025 to conduct interviews, hold focus group meetings, and prepare an online public survey. The committee will be consulted to follow the development of this study and participate in consultations.

## **10) DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The meeting dates for the entire year of 2025 have been circulated. The next meeting will be held on Monday, May 5, 2025.

## **11) ADJOURNMENT**

### **2025-03TR**

It was moved by Normand Maillet that the meeting be adjourned at 5:05 PM.