

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES—JULY 21, 2025
RICHIBUCTO @ 4:00 PM

1) CALL TO ORDER

Claudette welcomes the members and opens the committee meeting at 4:10 p.m.

2) ATTENDANCE

Claudette Dupuis, Christel Robichaud (Zoom), Normand Maillet, Ray Portugaliza, Roméo Bourque, Francine Daigle

Other attendees: Julie Bernard, Isabelle Godin, Marc Thibert, Danik Savoie

Absent: Jean-Charles Daigle

3) NEW MEMBER

Francine Daigle joins the committee as a customer representative. Claudette and the committee members welcome her and thank her for getting involved in the committee.

4) DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

5) ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

2025-08TR

It was moved by Roméo Bourque, seconded by Normand Maillet, that the agenda be adopted as presented.

Motion carried

6) ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES OF MAY 5, 2025

2025-09TR

It was moved by Normand Maillet, seconded by Roméo Bourque, that the minutes of the May 5, 2025 meeting be adopted as presented.

Motion carried

7) DEPARTMENT UPDATE

a) STATISTICS

Isabelle presented the statistics from April to June 2025. We currently have 26 volunteer drivers in the SIGTIC system. The document indicates 27, but it was prepared before the death of a long-time volunteer driver, Ernie Hébert. The committee took this opportunity to acknowledge the loss of an important member of our team. Julie indicates that she currently has the file of a potential driver who will soon be added to the list.

We also have 608 clients registered in the SIGTIC system. This is an increase of 54 clients since the last meeting. During the three-month period, 976 trips were made with a total of 3,903 stops, 101,653.30 km travelled, and 145 trips cancelled.

Roméo suggests that the customer statistics be more detailed to include the increase in customers by region compared to the last quarter and the previous year. Isabelle confirms that she will be able to make these changes to the statistics without any problem.

b) PROMOTION

Since last meeting, Isabelle and Danik attended an event in Nouvelle-Arcadie. The meeting had an excellent turnout compared to the last meeting in this region, where only four (4) people showed up. There was a little over thirty (30) people present this time at the “L’ancienne jeunesse” residence. A *fricot* dinner was served at the event, which certainly helped attract people. A few people took the information to become volunteers but have not yet contacted Julie to confirm their interest.

Isabelle mentioned a meeting with the MADA group was held in the Grand-Bouctouche area. About ten people showed up. Two people expressed interest in becoming volunteers, but once again, Julie has not received any further information.

In response to Roméo’s request, made during the May 5th meeting, to hold a presentation of the program at a public meeting of the Beausoleil Council, Isabelle explained she contacted Beausoleil’s CAO. Mr. Doiron acknowledged receipt of the presentation request and told her that he would get back to her with a possible date in the fall.

A targeted mailing was sent to the municipality of Nouvelle-Arcadie as well as to Pointe-Sapin, Baie-Sainte-Anne, Escuminac, and Hardwicke, where we still do not have any drivers.

Danik mentioned that he held meetings with several senior clubs in the greater region as well as with Bien Vieillir chez Soi Beausoleil. The number of people attending the meetings ranged from five (5) to thirty (30). They seem to have enough interest in the program and in becoming volunteers, but this interest simply does not reach our employees.

Roméo mentioned that there had been good discussions within the public safety committee about the best way to reach people in our communities. Several methods were suggested, including using social media, parish newsletters (church), the Knights of Columbus, mailings, etc. Romeo will see if he can share this list with us. Isabelle appreciates this offer and mentions that the department is open to using as many methods as possible simultaneously to reach our residents.

c) DISPATCH SERVICES

Isabelle tells us about the Blaise Transit Inc. platform. She begins by explaining that she doesn't really have any updates, but informs us that the "payment" option in the new system is not yet ready. She can't really run any tests because the trips don't show the correct amount, which would allow us to check if any problems persist. She adds that these delays will likely force us to renew our SAUVÉR-SIGTIC license. We did not include this in the 2025 budget because the province stated the new platform would be ready in November 2024. We have already notified ESIC and ELG that as soon as we receive the invoice for this renewal, we will pay it and ask for their help with these unexpected costs. We cannot run a deficit because of their delay on the new platform.

Claudette asks why there are differences in mileage from one booking to another. She gives an example of a day when she had two (2) clients who live close to each other and the emails sent by the SAUVÉR-SIGTIC platform showed a significant difference for both clients. For some reason, the system had sent them on different routes, one via Route 11 and the other via Irishtown. Isabelle says she will follow up with the developers, but that it is possible the problem cannot be fixed if it is not a development error. It is not reasonable to invest in the SAUVÉR-SIGTIC platform when the new platform is coming. Julie will keep an eye on the routes that go through Irishtown, as that is where most of the problems seem to occur.

d) WHEELCHAIR-ACCESSIBLE VAN

Marc tells us that a shelter in the Rogersville area asked him if we offer transportation for social outings with the van. Marc explained that this is not feasible at the moment, but that it is being discussed and studied as part of the study Danik is developing. Marc goes on to share that everything is going well with the van: clients are always proud to receive our help, and it is becoming increasingly busy with people with reduced mobility.

Isabelle mentions that it has been almost one (1) year now since we got the van. We are receiving more and more requests for wheelchairs. Marc tells us that there are still people who are not aware of this service. Promotional efforts must therefore continue in this area as well. Danik and Marc will be at the Farmers' Market in Bouctouche with the van on Saturday, July 26, for this reason.

8) REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY

Danik explains that he has met with nearly sixty (60) groups of people. He is currently analyzing their recommendations. He mentions that he has conducted telephone surveys with all of our volunteer drivers. The most common response was that we are not ready to increase our service offering. They insist that more volunteers are needed to provide non-essential trips.

Danik is trying to limit changes to user fees. For example, at the beginning of the year, trips for medical reasons to Stella-Maris-de-Kent Hospital and Dr. George L. Dumont University Hospital Center were free, covered by Vitalité. The funds from this grant were used up in less than four months. He believes that such partnerships should be developed again to limit the impact on our residents. He mentions that trips to food banks in the region should be free, as it is clear that these clients need all the financial assistance they can get. Isabelle confirms that this change will take effect as soon as possible thanks to funds from the Resilience Committee.

Danik also recommends stabilizing costs for unproductive trips, i.e., when the driver travels from their home to the client's home. This cost varies depending on the client's proximity to the driver. He recommends a cap of \$15.00 for these trips, which would help residents in areas where there are few or no volunteers. The client would pay \$15.00 for the round trip between the driver's home and their own, and the rest of the trip would be charged at the regular rate. Implementing this system would be somewhat difficult through our dispatch platforms, but nothing is impossible.

Another point Danik mentions is that since the KRSC has been managing the regional transportation service, we no longer verify clients. This is a concern for some drivers when they meet new clients. He does not have a solution to offer us at this time. Julie points out that there are certain clients for whom she only sends specific drivers. She mentions, for example, certain clients for whom she only sends male drivers.

Regarding the van, Danik said that he has often heard suggestions that it could be used for other non-essential activities, but that a higher rate would be charged for this type of trip. The van could be available in the evenings and on weekends for this additional service. He also mentioned that we could partner with Stella-Maris-de-Kent Hospital to transport medical staff who live in Moncton and are currently transported by taxi to the hospital. We could set a fixed price of \$35.00 to \$40.00 per hour to drive staff to work.

His report will be presented to the committee this fall and then to the KRSC Board of Directors.

9) NEW BUSINESS

Nothing to report.

10) NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for October 20 at 4 p.m., but there may be a special meeting before this regular meeting to present the regional transportation study. More details to come.

ADJOURNMENT

2025-10TR

It was moved by Normand Maillet that the meeting be adjourned at 5:23 p.m.