COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Wednesday March 28, 2003

The Council met at 9:35 a.m.

The Clerk advised the Speaker that a quorum was present.

The Speaker called the meeting to order.

The opening prayer was read by Councillor Lubosch.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy, His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Vandal, Wyatt and Lazarenko.

Mr. Speaker: Notice of Special Meeting read please Mr. Clerk.

Amended Special Meeting Notice

Pursuant to Section 79(1) of The City of Winnipeg Charter, I am directed by His Worship Mayor Murray to arrange a Special Meeting of Council on March 28, 2003, at 9:30 a.m., to consider

1. The 2003 Preliminary Capital Estimates.
2. Appointments and Indemnification of Board Members for the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra.

M. Lemoine
Deputy City Clerk.

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME OF GUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: We have the honour this morning of having three Pages who have returned, can't get enough of this punishment I guess.

We have David Gudel of Fort Richmond Collegiate who resides in the St. Norbert Ward.

Allison Forzley of St. Mary's Academy, resides in the Fort Rouge Ward.

And Madeleine Pundyk also of St. Mary's Academy who resides in the River Heights-Fort Garry Ward. Welcome.

No announcements. Move onto delegations. Our first delegation this morning, Mr. Nick Ternette in opposition to Item No. 1 of Report "A". Mr. Ternette, welcome.

DELEGATIONS

Mr. Nick Ternette: Mr. Speaker, thank you.

Mayor Murray, members of City Council. I'm here feeling very disheartened. While I'm in full support of a rapid transit system for Winnipeg, I cannot support spending almost five million dollars on some kind of corridor based rapid transit bus option.

I categorically reject the notion that half a loaf of bread is better than nothing. Even if that half loaf of bread is bad. Even though I understand that this $4.2 million will be split evenly between the City, the Province and the Federal Government based on the fact that the Federal Government is providing monies for rapid transit bus options rather than rail options, I cannot see how we can spend the money for something that is not a rapid transit system.

Not only that, I understand this money includes the building of a section of a rapid transit bus lane within the Perimeter Corridor in order to test the various optical and magnetic guides to this bus system. This does not even allow the City to entertain any rail options.

When is this going to end? Can anyone at City Council explain to me what the heck Mayor Murray is talking about when he is selling this concept as being sexy. When was a bus ever sexy? A bus is a bus. And where does Mayor Murray get the notion of operating a magnetic and optical option bus system steered by optical magnetic guise making drivers almost unnecessary or I understand we will have drivers. As I said in my original statement, that transit union might have something to say about that.

Just imagine the following scenario. People riding what they think is a normal bus suddenly find themselves without a driver because they're riding on a rubber or magnetic rail, suddenly the bus leaves, the rail stops and the driver gets back to drive the bus again. Who's going to want to travel on such a convoluted contraption?

The reality is that after 40 years of talking we are not going to have a rapid transit system, but an express transit bus system.

If you remember the '60s then Mayor Juba called for the need for Winnipeg to develop a rapid transit system, which he called a monorail system. The key word being rail. A rapid transit system is an electrified train running on rails. Anything else is just another version of having more than one bus running on gasoline by the way, environmentally not friendly. At the same time a particular area on a corridor where no other traffic will be allowed.

Every major city the size of Winnipeg in North America has a proper public transportation system. They either have a subway or a ride rail transit system, streetcars and feeder bus lines attached to the system. Winnipeg is one of the few cities that is exclusively reliant on cars and buses. And the more you listen to City Council talking about this rapid transit bus corridor, the more you realize that Winnipeg is the centre of bus manufacturing. Flyer and Motor Coach Industries and how convenient to increase a rapid transit bus system.

I get the impression that Mayor Murray and City Council see Winnipeg as being the centre of bus building in North America, ignoring both I think the economic and environmental implications of a proper public transportation system. I would like to remind Mayor Murray and City Council that in the final report of TransPlan the report of 1995 it is a survey of all those citizens who were involved in that survey, 71% felt is was very important to develop a rapid transit system for Winnipeg rather than more streets for automobiles.

By the way in 1990 both Councillor Clement stated the Southwest Transit Corridor at that time would become as he said a glorified bus route that won't work.

Here we are in the year 2003 talking about a glorified bus route, an idea that was originally defeated in 1990.

I lived in Calgary between 1980 and 1985 where I witnessed the building of the LRT for the 1988 Winter Olympics. I can tell you what a significant impact it had on both urban sprawl and downtown redevelopment. On the one hand from the building of LRT stations in suburban areas and the downtown, spawned the construction of buildings and people around these stations, restaurants, stores, hotels etc., igniting a building boom if you want to say that, that hadn't been seen since the oil boom in Calgary.

On the other hand the development of carparks in suburbia ensured that there was a 50% reduction in the use of cars in the downtown during rush hour. Everyone including the middle class in suburbia started to use public transportation, even those who had cars. Why? Because it was efficient, it got you downtown in less than 50 minutes. Clean and safe. And the words clean, safe and friendly is the most important ones as compared to what we're talking about when we're talking about buses.

To suggest as Mayor Murray does an express bus system is going to have a significant impact on the public transportation system in Winnipeg is nonsensical. In fact I've been told by the transit people that there will be no increase in frequency of buses on the rapid lanes that buses will be retrofitted and shifted to the rapid bus lanes. However, they say that these buses will move twice as fast as regular buses from point A to B so therefore, they claim there'll be an increase in frequency.

On the other hand Mayor Murray has indicated there will be 20 new buses for the rapid transit bus system and I wonder who's right on this.

So let's stop fooling around, wasting money on consultants and testing various mechanical options that simply won't survive this kind of climate. It's been indicated to us that only one option is viable in this climate out of the four they want to test.

(9:45)

And realize that this express transit bus option is no option for Winnipeg. Get on the path like Calgary and Edmonton, Vancouver to building an LRT that could become the cornerstone of a public transportation system that is safe, healthy and cost-effective. That will begin to discourage the use of cars and encourage people to use their public transportation system.

I urge City Council to reject the $4.2 million for a rapid bus system, and either move an amendment to ensure that if you're going to have this in the capital budget that you would allow rail option to be at least looked at by the consultant's as an option of this rapid transit system because it isn't. We have been told that rail is not an option in this study. Or if you're not going to do that then put the $4.2 million into improving the present transit system that is more regular buses, heated bus shelters and improve handi-transit service. I think those are the options that have to be looked at.

If rail is not an option, it is not rapid transit and it is not fair for the citizens of Winnipeg to pay for something that simply isn't going to improve the transit system in the long run. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you. Councillor Angus has a question.

Councillor Angus: Thank you Mr. Speaker. Are you aware that the costs of light rapid transportation in Vancouver is in excess of $75 million per kilometre estimated?

Mr. Ternette: Mr. Speaker I'm not the cost-effective person Mr. Jeff Lowe will be here talking about.

I understand the operating costs in the beginning of an LRT system tend to be a little higher. But in the long run there is savings in terms of the kind of system that you have to put in.

The costs of an LRT are not as exaggerated or as high as you suggest. I understand that many cities that have developed new technology even with rail that cut the costs down. I think that a study if a study is properly carried out looking at the actual total costs not only in the short term but in the long term in terms of capital costs and operating costs you will find that those costs are much closer to each other than you think they are. That would have to be done by a professional expert and not by either myself or yourself who are not experts in that field.

Councillor Angus: I agree. That's why I want to make sure that you understand. And are you aware that what Council is approving was based on a slide presentation that was put together with the help of the Administration that says, preliminary assessment of alternative technologies, which certainly would allow us to investigate….

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Angus no preamble.

Councillor Angus: Are you aware of that?

Mr. Ternette: Mr. Speaker, we spent two hours with the transit people going over all the diagrams and stuff, and we asked very clearly on the question. Is rail part of an option of looking or all technologies because we were assured that all forms of technology was to be examined as part of the consultant's report. We were categorically told, rail option is not part of it. The only options that are being looked at is in terms of the type of different bus systems that we have. One in Adelaide, Australia, one in Nice, Paris and wherever else. Four types of magnetic and residents and guided systems that are going to be looked at. But rail is not even to be considered in this study. And that's all we can report back here.

Councillor Angus: Mr. Speaker, I'm going to ask for a second round.

I would like Mr. Speaker to ask the delegation if he is aware that the Adelaide system is a guided rail system?

Mr. Ternette: Mr. Speaker, my information and what we looked at is some form of a track but it is not rail in any way, shape or form that I can assume. But again, I will refer that question to Jeff Lowe is more the expert on that area. I don't consider it to be rail to be honest with you.

Councillor Angus: Mr. Ternette are you aware that the Vancouver system that you have touted uses a combination of light rapid transportation bus transportation and rail transportation? And that the United States Government, Federal Transportation Administration touts this particular system as a successful model?

Mr. Ternette: Mr. Speaker I'm well aware that as I've indicated in my speech that different components to a decent public transportation system. I prefer the Calgary system where the LRT is the fine one.

Buses, we are not anti bus, let's be very very clear. We believe buses are part of the feeder service and we'll always be proud the service. But if you're going to build a significant rapid transit system as part of the main elements of a public transportation system, it has got to be rail not buses. Buses will always be part of a public transportation system. To imply that we're simply going to eliminate buses is ridiculous. Not one of us has ever argued that point.

What we're saying is, as Calgary is, you have feeder bus lines coming off an LRT. You have in Toronto, you have still electric trams as part of the system, that makes it different components. But the main component in most major cities of our size in North America and in Europe is LRT. If you can't afford a subway and obviously we can't, that is way beyond our means, then you go to an LRT system which the Germans have developed, developed the LRT system in Calgary and those Germans have developed some of the best technology and the cheapest technology that you can have in developing a proper public transportation system.

Mr. Speaker: Thank you Mr. Ternette.

Second delegation in the five minute slot, Mr. Jeff Lowe also in opposition to Item No. 1 Report "A".

Mr. Jeff Lowe: I suppose I should thank you all for the opportunity to roll the clock back to 1990. I don't know how you feel though but for some reason or other I don't feel like I'm 13 years younger.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Mayor, Councillors, Mr. Clerk. You've been given to understand that you are today being asked to approve funding in a comparatively modest amount merely to get the ball rolling in a preliminary and non binding way on the long delayed Southwest Rapid Transit Corridor. You have been pitched for your support on the basis that the money is to be used for nothing more specific or consequential than that. The words of Transit Director, Rick Borland, in a March 12, CBC Radio interview however, revealed the true purpose of today's vote. To pre-emtively lock yourselves and this city's modern citizens into building a fraudulent and unwanted express bus freeway. So as to at all costs stave off and preclude the achievement of a rail base system which is upheld to be the defining characteristic of rapid transit the world over.

This has been the unyielding goal of the cult of automobile dealers, urban sprawl mongers, oil and rubber tire freaks and deranged traffic engineers whose function as the real power behind the throne in this town. The Transit Department performs at the beckon call of that cleak.

Since their historic triumph of 1955 when the last streetcar tracks were pulled up supposedly to be replaced with a subway that has never arrived, they have ensured their dominance by keeping this city's transit users on a steady starvation diet of nothing but buses.

From going on 50 years of first hand experience, Winnipeggers are altogether to familiar with the physical and operational limitations of that mode. Bus transit is by definition inferior transit they know.

By its unreliability and shabbiness it forces the majority with cars to resort to using them much more than they would prefer to or should have to.

Never is that more ironically evident than during one of our chronic snowstorms precisely when you'd most like to be able to rely on public transit, instead the snow clogs slippery streets cause buses to fall so exaggeratedly behind schedule that the imperative to drive becomes even greater than normal stressing your frazzled nerves to the breaking point. All this in the outrageous absence of the subway or light rail system that would function as it routinely does in most other cities which Winnipeggers can only sample if they're away on holiday or business as our lifeline through the storm.

(9:55)

In short, the pressing problems Winnipeg transit has been facing not least of which has been the steady falloff in ridership or symptoms of the system that long ago hit the upper limit of what could be achieved within an existing capacity and with the resources it has on hand. A move to diversifying and opening up new horizons by creating a rail based rapid transit component thus obviously was and is decades overdue. Yet our public officials in defiance of all evidence and logic persistent encouraged in flogging solutions, stressing all the more the very thing that got us and keeps us in the pickle in which we find ourselves and to the maddeningly abstinent exclusion of all else. It was for this very reason that rapid transit was turned down the last time it was actively considered in November of 1990 because of the rampant abuse of process and the administration and EPC's arrogant clampdown on Council's latitude to exercise sound judgement by confronting it with a false dichotomy. Bus way or nothing.

Have they learned nothing? Do they wish history to repeat itself? Just maybe they do.

Much more meaningful than what these bus propagandas are telling you, are the things that they deliberately and misleadingly omit mentioning. Of the cities which sport bus way it is almost universally the case that rail is the dominate mode. Furthermore, the bus ways themselves invariably serve in a secondary role as feeders to a trunk line rail service or as an allegedly stop gap, money saving measure paving the way for the subsequent installation of rail.

Also I've noticed the fact that the City's currently undertaking experimentation with the advance guidance systems about which you've heard are not only smaller than Winnipeg but a fraction of our size.

One such example whose material has been bogged by the Mayor's Office is the transit district composed of the Oregon capital region cities of Salem and Eugene. Their literature talks about their core not yet being in a league population wise where we're in a position to emulate the model established by our sister city of nearby Portland. Is this who Winnipeg's leadership views our city as being on par with?

In the meantime cities that look confidentially to the future and wish to grow and prosper including ones in past are presently are smaller than Winnipeg stakes their prospects on rail.

Mr. Speaker: Wrap up your time is up.

Mr. Lowe: Could I ask for an extension please.

Mr. Speaker: There is no extension to delegations. Take another minute to finish it up.

Mr. Lowe: I'll finish right there and now thanks.

Mr. Speaker: We have had an additional request for a five minute slot on the same issue on the same side. It's up to you, what is your will?

Councillor Smith: I would like Jeff Lowe to finish his presentation.

Mr. Speaker: Councillor Smith has moved that the rules be suspended and that Mr. Jeff Lowe be given time to finish his presentation. All in favour? Contrary?

There is no time limit in the motion, and there is no opportunity to debate the motion. This would give him as long as he wants.

All in favour of suspending the rules please rise.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yes

His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi,

Mr. Speaker: Take it as unanimous minus one, I'm recorded in opposition.

Mr. Lowe you have as much time as you wish.

Mr. Lowe: It's much appreciated that's all I ask for and that's all I ever ask for.

I harbour no illusions about whether you'll find favour with my arguments in the end, but you can't dispense with our deal with an issue as complex as this one is in the space of a brief talk.

To properly lay out all the issues for you and all of their technical complexity would require a seminar. I would have been only too happy to do one of those for you at no cost and of my own volition as always.

In the meantime cities that look confidentially to the future and wish to grow and prosper including ones in past and presently smaller than Winnipeg stake their prospects on rail. In fact when Kitchener, Waterloo and Victoria this past December weighed in a serious candidates, Rick Borland's professional pride was sufficiently pricked which prompted him to remark, when will it be Winnipeg's turn.

They succeed because only the emplacement of rail gives business the confidence to boost its investment because it's fixed in place, involves a dedicated vehicular fleet and thus represents a commitment for the long haul that cannot readily be reneged upon. Whereas there is nothing to disincent or physically prevent the authorities from scaling back on bus service simply by withholding buses.

Then there are the horror stories about problems with newfangled automated bus guidance technologies coming out in the wash. Breakdowns and crashes to which the bombardier design system in that Nice, France has fallen victim. The vehicles which have the hydraulic arm extending from the underside which must carefully be aligned with a slot in the middle of the pavement have gone out of control so often when entering and exiting the guide way that at one point they had to be taken out of service and replaced by conventional buses for upwards of a year.

The optically guided IRUS bus system found in Nanterre, France, snowfall of sufficient intensity and any accumulation of snow or ice on the pavement obscures the painted line the vehicle orients itself to, thereby blinding its guidance system.

The OBON set-up employed in Adelaide, Australia long admired by Mayor Murray to be practical this system cannot accommodate any level crossings of intersecting streets, since the wheels of the buses run within trenches, recessed below pavement level, they would have to slow to a crawl to negotiate gaps at every intersection, whereas Adelaide is blessed with a balmy climate, in our fair city it would be a daunting task to keep the trenches from becoming blocked with ice and snow.

The continuing dependence on a system whatever trendy technology it might ultimately adapt found it exclusively on buses will serve to perpetuate the myriad operational liabilities that dog the mode. There will be no reduction whatsoever in the complexity of route structure which would make the system overall user friendlier and one of the virtues of rail.

You'll still need to know which bus to board to get you where you want to go and where on the station platform to catch it.

(10:01)

The one seat trip that is to say the elimination of the need to transfer between buses aspect, is being vastly oversold. It only applies to routes that enter and leave the corridor way at its end points, routes that cross the corridor way in intermediate points along its path will still require transferring. So will nearly all the routes that originate in areas not within the catchment area of the corridor. The largest bus even if lengthened with articulated add ons is incapable of approaching the ultimate passenger loading capacity of rail cars coupled together into trains, so you lose the economies of scale.

It's this last factor that really serves to define a crucial distinction between the respective utility of buses and railcars as transit assets. Call it value for money.

We could spend our money on a bus base system which doesn't result in expanding the size of our transit system one iota from what it is now. Which accounts for why I have characterized bus ways as the transit equivalent of hamburger helper.

Or for the same money or less we could invest in it in installing a proper rail based rapid transit system such that with the added capacity which includes the ability to beef up bus service and redeploy it to augmenting the rail trunk, we enable transit to attract and accommodate a much greater percentage of all trips taken then had previously been the case.

So this whole convoluted and bizarre scheme to foist buses on us no matter what and nothing but, in the end seems to be just a big game of let's pretend. That multiple tractor trailer units for human cargo can be passed off as the equal of trains. That bus manufacturing companies should attempt to rip off commissions for which only rail car manufacturers should qualify. That bus ways are cheaper than rail because the buses used on the bus way don't cost a penny. And in order to be in line for creative funding a transit infrastructure project can be pitched as a test of new technology. Since rail which has been in widespread use for approximately 300 years constitutes proven reliable mature technology.

Insofar as the course you must take the people of Winnipeg have again and again supplied guidance as to what they have in mind. But never really so than in the extremely thorough public opinion survey that in 1995 was the first task undertaken on behalf of the City directed TransPlan 2010 study. Of all the options presented for improvements that could be made to transportation facilities in Winnipeg, the single proposition that drew the strongest response of the entire survey, 71% support nothing else even came close. Was one which called for the creation of a city-wide rapid transit system defined as a monorail or subway. The people have spoken loudly and clearly. What they want is no different than their counterparts in Toronto, Montreal, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver have already got.

We are no less entitled to it than people in those cities. Stop filibustering, stop stalling, quit forever pointing over the horizon to some invisible laden federal, provincial galleon that always at the last instant gets blown off course. Beg, borrow or steal the required sum but get on with it damn it, lest we sink still farther into mediocrity and back in the pack. Thank you.

(Councillor Lazarenko in the Chair)

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Any questions? Councillor Smith.

Councillor Smith: Mr. Lowe, can you explain how including the construction of a test track will in effect bind us for ruling out certain technologies?

Mr. Lowe: Where it binds us and what I had presented in the way of evidence are the comments that our transit director Rick Borland made to the CBC in a story that was aired on CBC One on March 12.

It's the comment that he made in response to the reporter.

"There will be a requirement that the City already have at least started on rapid transit in order to qualify for that new program." By the way that's certainly news to me and it seems counter intuitive on the face of it.

"It relates in particular to getting something in the ground very quickly so that we can show that we have at least a start on rapid transit in Winnipeg to qualify for that federal program", he says.

I provided you with a copy of this and if you want to see it in its original format it was web posted on March 12 the same day that the story went to air, and it is still available by searching the CBC Winnipeg Radio One website.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Any further questions? If not, thank you.

We need suspension of the rules to hear an additional delegation. Jim Jarowski to speak in opposition. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Recorded vote.

A RECORDED VOTE was taken the result being as follows:

Yeas

Councillors De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steeves, Wyatt, Clement.

Nays

Mr. Deputy Speaker Councillor Lazarenko, His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Thomas.

Deputy City Clerk: The vote Mr. Speaker, Yeas 8, Nays 5.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: It's carried. Mr. Jaworski.

Mr. Jim Jaworski: It's sure nice to have some justice in this room once and a while.

As you can see in the news in the past few days, oil corrupts the human condition. It causes people to literally kill for the power of owning and controlling it. We don't want a diesel powered misguided bus way in our city which is built on the same type of energy source. Winnipeg Transit senior administration and officials continue to dust off its 30 year plan to promote a propulsion technology closely tied to these interests. By their very nature buses can't be sexy. Most people when talking of the bus will usually refer to it in a negative tone. Such as when will that damn bus arrive. That's because diesel bus technology cannot copy the running characteristics of rail based transit in terms of passenger comfort and service frequency levels which would make it I guess a sexy train.

Bus ways were invented by the highway lobby, by people like Wendal Cox of the extreme right wing public purpose group in the U.S., and John Bonsal formerly of O.C. Transpo who oversaw the design of the Ottawa transit way.

(10:10)

Likewise the same type of minds have infiltrated our senior transit administration because they are connected to the political ideology of this extreme far right to oil and automobile war mongering imperialism of the current George W. Bush Administration, and the perpetual expansion of the diesel bus industry as stemming the flood of passengers that would if given the choice switch from cars to rail transit. Remember the PBS documentary a few years ago exposing General Motors in having a hand in dismantling of the streetcar systems of the 1950s and '60s. Likewise, our senior transit administration is perpetuating diesel bus only technology and will do anything in its power to stop rail transit from ever running here.

In effect they are their own worst enemy. They literally don't want to see an increase in the number of passengers on our transit system.

You want proof? Bill Menzies was quoted in the story, fix streets or build rapid

transit system. On the CBC Manitoba news website posted March 25, 2003, as saying, that WT won't increase the size of the transit fleet for the Southwest Corridor by one more bus and service levels will basically remain exactly as current.

Want a recent example of bus way technology gone bad? The City of Nancy, France where the population of 200,000 citizens use dual mode guided bus way technology called a teffay or transit (inaudible) to expand its electric trolley bus network using proprietary does more costly technology and has had nothing but problems with it since day one.

The technical problems were so severe that the City was forced to shut down one month after March 2001 opening, and they had to put regular buses back on the street until the system is fixed.

To quote an article on light railnow.org regarding the Nancy system. "One of the teffay buses lost ability causing its rear end to strike a power line pole and injuring three passengers with flying glass. The drivers then went on a one day strike on the grounds that the new system was unsafe. No sooner had they been coaxed back to work when exactly the same thing happened at the same point in the early morning so there was no injuries. The line was shut down immediately and indefinitely pending an inquiry to be held by a technical commission.

Winnipeg Transit's latest bus highway proposal is described by one website as small vehicles provide for internal transport facilities in factories and large automated transportation of containers and poor cargo handling yards. At frog.nl a list of applications for technology for which it is best suited include company warehouse, hospitals, airports, amusement parks and places of interest. I support this type of use but not for urban passenger transport.

Magnetic or optically guided bus way wouldn't work in Winnipeg either which is under snow for about five months of the year. Because the lifetime of a diesel bus is 18 to 20 years old with a major overhaul after the first 12 and with the lifetime of rail transit vehicles between 30 and 40 years it is more prudent in terms of vehicle lifespan. Therefore Winnipeg or any other city for that matter can't afford operating a bus way at a cost ten times more than they would be under a light rail line and not be able to….

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Your time is up. Any questions? Councillor Wyatt moves the extension of two minutes. All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Mr. Jaworski: Why build a bus that looks like a train? Why not go the whole way and use off the shelve reliable save mature rail base technology in the first place?

Building the Southwest rapid transit corridor as a bus highway with recent estimates as high as one billion dollars would be a colossal and irresponsible waste of taxpayer funds. In fact for the cost of one bus way, that is one billion dollars, Winnipeg could have one and a half or two light rail transit lines. Calgary transit themselves have said that operating costs per seat, per hour, are ninety-five cents for a 45 seat diesel bus, and fifty-nine cents for a three car hundred and sixty seat light rail vehicle. According to another article at lightrailnow.org and I'll provide two examples. OC Transpo in Ottawa has lost over 10% of its ridership since the bus highway opened in 1983. A failed expensive system.

When Pittsburgh's west bus highway opened, estimates of 50,000 weekday passengers were declared. However only there are currently 9,000 weekday riders making it a failure. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Any questions? Seeing none. Thank you.

Mr. Mayor Report "A" of the Executive Policy Committee dated March 25, 2003.

REPORT "A" OF THE REPORT OF EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE DATED MARCH 25, 2003

**Item No. 1 - 2003 Preliminary Capital Estimates
File FC (2003)**

Mayor Murray: I'll ask Councillor Clement to introduce the capital budget.

Councillor Clement: Thank you Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to introduce the Capital Budget.

We've had a lot of discussion about this over the last two or three weeks in particular. I think the document is fair in terms of what we can afford. For the fifth or sixth year in a row we are not borrowing for our capital budget which I think is significant. That has had huge ramifications for our current budget and our total financial picture and I think that we've been winning on that front.

I think it's fair to note as well that there are some changes from when we originally brought forward the document. There have been some changes, the city-wide accessibility program that was missed is now in for $250,000. There's a streetscaping issue that has come forward in the last few weeks and we have got the money set aside to deal with that at the appropriate time. We have also added $450,000 basically as a contingency for playground structures that there has been some motions around and there will have to be some policy dealt with around that issue over the coming few weeks. Once the policy comes forward the money will be there to deal with those repairs in a good number of parks.

I think that I'd also like to point out that in this document there is approximately $1.67 million for regional park expenditures. There are a significant number of these throughout the City. They have been left on the backburner in many situations. They are in this document. There's a $1.4 million in this document Mr. Speaker for repairs to the Pan American Pool.

(10:20)

We have a further $700,000 in this document for other facilities throughout the City. There has been an increase in regional streets spending in this document. And our residential street spending will be as it was stated, it would be a year ago.

I think all in all that it's a reasonable document. It's a one year document in isolation of a five year. I'm looking forward to dealing with that larger document a little further on into the year Mr. Speaker. I think we will be able to plan for the future of this city within that document over the next coming months. This is of course a one year document to buy us the time to get into that in a much more detailed way. I'm quite happy to move this and the series of motions that go with it.

I'd like to finish by thanking the staff, many of whom are in the room today and the people that are subordinate to them for all of the hard work. I know they put in countless hours. They worked weekends in many cases and they certainly work into the evening on many many days to try and have these documents done for us in a timely fashion. Their support is much appreciated. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Are you ready for the question? All in favour? Contrary? Carried unanimously.

I believe there's another motion on the floor for the Report of the Executive Policy, on the appointments. The Mayor moves this. The Report of EPC of March 28, 2003.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE POLICY COMMITTEE
DATED MARCH 28, 2003**

**Item No. 1 - Appointments and Indemnification of Board Members for the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra
File FG-1.1(W) (Vol. 12)**

Mr. Deputy Speaker: All in favour? Contrary? Carried.

Councillor Eadie moves adjournment. All in favour? Contrary? Carried. Roll call.

ROLL CALL

Clerk: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Councillor Lazarenko, His Worship Mayor Murray, Councillors Eadie, Angus, Clement, De Smedt, Gerbasi, Lubosch, Pagtakhan, Smith, Steek, Steeves, Thomas, Vandal, Wyatt, Mr. Speaker Councillor O'Shaughnessy.

COUNCIL ADJOURNED AT 10:25 A.M.

COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WINNIPEG
Wednesday March 28, 2003
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