



Wednesday, December 29, 2021

9:00 a.m.

Pages

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. OPENING CEREMONIES – O CANADA AND MOMENT OF REFLECTION
3. OPEN FORUM (MAXIMUM FIFTEEN MINUTES)

*Interested persons are invited to speak to Council about any matter that appears on this Agenda. Please sign the registration form available from the Deputy Clerk or Clerk. Individuals may only speak for a total of three (3) minutes.*

4. APPROVE OR AMEND AGENDA

**Resolution:**

That Township of Chatsworth Council adopt the agenda as circulated.

5. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST
6. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES
7. MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES
8. PUBLIC MEETINGS (Statutory and Non-Statutory)
9. MATTERS ARISING FROM PUBLIC MEETINGS
10. PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS (Pre-Registered)
11. MATTERS ARISING FROM PRESENTATIONS/DELEGATIONS
12. INTRODUCTION OF BY-LAWS – FIRST AND SECOND READING
13. COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

13.1. Consent Agenda and Determination of Items to be Separated

*Chatsworth Council: If you wish to separate an Item from the Consent Agenda or if you wish to support any of the motions from other municipalities, please contact the Clerk's Dept. prior to the meeting so a resolution can be prepared.*

Resolution:

That the Consent agenda items be hereby received for information.

13.1.a. Reports for Information

13.1.b. Committee Minutes

13.1.b.a. Minutes from Saugeen Mobile and Regional Transit  
June 25, July 23, October 1 and October 29

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13.1.c. Correspondence for Council information

13.1.d. Motions from Other Municipalities

13.2. Staff Reports and Verbal Updates from Staff

13.3. Consideration of By-laws

13.4. Items Requiring Direction

13.4.a. Saugeen Mobility and Regional Transit - 2022 Budget

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That Township of Chatsworth Council hereby supports the  
2022 Saugeen Mobility and Regional Transit Budget.

13.5. Items Requiring Discussion including Items Removed from Consent  
Agenda

13.6. Rise and Report from Committee of the Whole

**14. ADOPT ACTION OF COUNCIL IN COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

**Resolution:**

That the actions taken in Committee of the Whole today be confirmed by this Council and the Minutes of the Committees be adopted; And Further that staff be authorized to take the actions necessary to give effect to the approved recommendations.

15. THIRD READING OF BY-LAWS

16. NOTICES OF MOTION

17. NOTICE PROVISION

18. TRACKING SHEET

19. OTHER BUSINESS

20. CLOSED MEETING

21. CONFIRMATORY BY-LAW

30

**Resolution:**

The By-law 2021-91 being a by-law to confirm all actions of the December 29th 2021 Council meeting be hereby read a first, second and third time, signed by the Mayor and Clerk and sealed with the Corporate Seal.

22. ADJOURNMENT

# **SAUGEEN MOBILITY**

## **and REGIONAL TRANSIT**

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### **GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Friday, June 25, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

**Board Members Present:** Councillor Dave Cuyler, Municipality of Kincardine  
Deputy Mayor Mark Davis, Municipality of Arran-Elderslie (for Doug Bell)  
Councillor Dean Leifso, Municipality of Brockton  
Mayor Scott Mackey, Township of Chatsworth  
Councillor Ed McGugan, Township of Huron-Kinloss  
Vice Deputy Mayor Mike Myatt, Town of Saugeen Shores  
Mayor John Woodbury, Township of Southgate

**Board Members Absent:** Councillor Doug Bell, Municipality of Arran-Elderslie  
Councillor Warren Dickert, Town of Hanover  
Councillor Beth Hamilton, Municipality of West Grey

**Others Present:** Roger Cook, Manager  
Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

The meeting was conducted by videoconference in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**1. Call to Order**

In the absence of President Warren Dickert, the session was chaired by Mike Myatt. The meeting was called to order at 1:31 p.m..

**2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

**Motion #2021-37**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Dean Leifso

That the agenda for June 25, 2021 be accepted as circulated.

**Carried**

**4. Minutes of the April 23, 2021 General Board Meeting**

**Motion #2021-38**

Moved by John Woodbury; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That the Board approve and adopt the minutes of the April 23, 2021 General Board Meeting as circulated.

**Carried**

**5. Business Arising from the Minutes**

The Chair noted that the President had requested that the Manager update the Board on the Employee Assistance Program. Accordingly, the Manager stated that the program is up and running at a cost of \$6.00 per month per employee. No feedback has been received so far on the program.

The Manager advised the Board that letters were sent to Bruce County Mayors asking them to keep SMART in mind in the context of the County's Transportation Master Plan. No responses have yet been received. Letters and an information package were also sent to the five municipalities in Grey County which are not partners in SMART. The Manager has spoken to representatives of Owen Sound Transit which is undergoing a review, and outlined that SMART can deliver a service that is good value for the money. No response from the municipalities has been received so far. The Manager agreed to keep the Board informed on the matter.

## 6. Correspondence

### A. Email from a Client

The Chair summarized the operational changes made over the last few months, noting that the Board has worked hard to review its level of service and manage costs. Ed McGugan asked if the changes to service were on SMART's web site and how they were communicated to clients. The Manager explained that the information was posted on the web site, and he will contact the web site administrators to see about making the information easier to find. He added that the client is visually impaired and would have received a notice about service changes with the invoice, but the notice may not have been read out loud. Also, during the pandemic, fewer invoices were sent, so some clients may not have received the notices. Dave Cuyler suggested that clients who are visually impaired should be called to inform them about such changes. The Manager noted that SMART will identify its visually impaired clients so as to be able to call them about service changes.

## 7. Manager's Reports and Recommendations

### A. Report 2021-12 April 2021 Operational

The Manager presented the report noting that pre-COVID user fees were in the range of \$30,000 per month.

#### Motion #2021-39

Moved by Mark Davis; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That Report 2021-12 April 2021 Operational be approved as presented.

**Carried**

### B. Report 2021-13 May 2021 Operational

The Manager presented the report, noting that the average user fee increased due to longer rides. May of 2020 was the low point, when no one was travelling at all. Ed McGugan asked about the nine excursions, which the Manager explained were all in Hanover for trips to the grocery store from long-term care/retirement facilities, and none were for social purposes.

#### Motion #2021-40

Moved by John Woodbury; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That Report 2021-13 2021 May 2021 Operational be approved as presented.

**Carried**

### C. 2021-14 Proposed Incident Reporting Policy

The Manager presented the policy which he and Ed McGugan worked on. Ed McGugan complimented the Manager on the good work he did in drafting the policy.

Mark Davis asked if there was a form to accompany the policy to ensure that all relevant information is collected in a consistent way. The Manager indicated that this could be done, with space included on the form for any diagram to explain the incident. Mike Myatt suggested adding that the report must be in writing, and Scott Mackey asked if "near misses", which can be learning opportunities and used to identify trends, were required to be reported. Dave Cuyler added that "near misses" can result in suggestions for improvements to municipal Councils or the province, and can identify places that cause difficulties such as bad intersections. Reporting "near misses" is intended to be helpful and not to judge a driver.

The Manager will revise the policy to include a form for reporting incidents including "near misses", a requirement that the report is to be in writing, and a section for outlining action taken by a driver such as calling police or EMS. The revised report will be submitted to the next Board meeting

**Motion #2021-41**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by John Woodbury  
That Report 2021-14 Proposed Incident Reporting Policy be deferred to the next Board meeting.  
**Carried**

**D. 2021-15 Surplus Vehicles**

The Manager presented the report noting that funds from the sale of surplus vehicles will go into the gas tax account administered by the Town of Hanover. Scott Mackey stated that the policy is the way to move forward by dealing with surplus vehicles in an open and transparent way.

**Motion #2021-42**

Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by Dave Cuyler  
That the Board approve report 2021-15 Surplus Vehicles as presented and authorize the Manager to dispose of the vehicles mentioned through GovDeals.ca.  
**Carried**

**E. Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccinations for Staff**

The Manager presented the report adding that a recent case in Texas resulted in an employer terminating 150 employees who refused to be vaccinated, an action which was supported by a judge when taken to court.

Scott Mackey said that he supports vaccinations but does not support the motion, as it is not up to a small organization like SMART to take this step. He noted that 25% of long term care staff have not been vaccinated and those who do not agree to being vaccinated are provided with medical evidence about the benefits of vaccinations or training about vaccinations. He believes that it is up to the province to take the step of requiring staff to be vaccinated. He added that vaccinations as a health and safety issue is for the benefit of employees, not clients, and to advance vaccinations as a health and safety issue for the protection of staff, would require clients to provide proof of vaccination.

Mark Davis stated that getting vaccinated is the right thing to do, but questioned whether it is legal for an employer to require employees to get vaccinated.

Dean Leifso suggested contacting a specialist lawyer, as the issue can be very sensitive, possibly leading to threats of a law suit. He pointed out that hospitals are not making vaccinations mandatory and if they did so, they would likely face legal action. He added that changes may be coming in terms of what activities are permitted, and that travel, going to movies and hockey games for example, may soon be allowed. He added that he is reluctant to support mandatory vaccinations for staff at this point.

Ed McGugan noted that the Prime Minister said that vaccinations won't be forced on anyone, so SMART needs to be careful on this issue. Dave Cuyler agreed with the positions put forward, noting that people should want to do everything possible to keep themselves and others safe and save lives, and it is perplexing that some people do not want to be vaccinated. John Woodbury noted that it is questionable whether employers can ask employees if they have been vaccinated, and the practice at his previous employer was only to ask if the vaccine had been offered. Mike Myatt said that he discussed the report with Warren Dickert and commended the Manager for bringing the issue forward.

**Motion #2021-43**

Moved by Dave Cuyler; Seconded by Scott Mackey  
That the Board authorize the Manager to require all SMART staff members to provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 before September 30, 2021.  
**Defeated**

**F. 2021-17 Return of Dispatcher/Scheduler**

The Manager presented the report, noting in response to a question that the Dispatcher/Scheduler has not worked all year, the Bookkeeper works four days a week and the Office Manager is full-time.

Scott Mackey asked whether April and May ride numbers justify a change to the staffing level. Mike Myatt asked if the return to work could be phased in and then re-examined in light of the July – August ridership numbers once they are known. He suggested possibly three days a week initially, then four in August and five in September. Ed McGugan noted that if June’s rides are in the range of 1,500 and there are 2,000 in July, this would be an increase of 30%, an indication that rides are coming back in a strong way. The Manager noted that the height of the ride numbers is about 3,000 per month and he anticipates that by the end of August, they will increase to about 80% of that. Dave Cuyler suggested that the decision on staffing should be based on rides reaching a specific level and then increasing the hours of work.

The Board discussed the possible implications to an employee’s Employment Insurance eligibility of returning to work. Dean Leifso was asked about the issue and suggested checking with an HR specialist and in response to a question from Mike Myatt, Catherine McKay advised checking with Town of Hanover payroll staff and/or Employment Insurance officials. Dave Cuyler said that SMART could ask the employee to return to work when needed, and hours worked would be provided to EI officials as part of the usual reporting. He said that it is possible for a person to work a certain amount and still collect EI benefits.

Scott Mackey said that if the employer does not have work for a person to do, it is hard to justify returning them to work on a full-time basis. Some flexibility should be demonstrated and consideration given to bringing employees back part-time. The Manager informed the Board that June ridership numbers will be available in mid-July and he will send them out to be considered at the July meeting. He confirmed that the Dispatcher/Scheduler is anxious to return to work.

**Motion #2021-44**

Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by John Woodbury

That the Board of Directors authorize the Manager to bring SMART’s Dispatcher/Scheduler back to work full-time on Monday, July 19, 2021.

**Motion #2021-45**

Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by John Woodbury

That Motion #2021-44 be amended to bring the Dispatcher/Scheduler back to work three days per week on Monday, July 19, 2021.

**Carried**

**8. Executive Committee Update**

**A. Notes from Committee Meetings – May 7 and June 4, 2021**

The Chair explained that the notes are for information only. The Manager explained that the next step on the partnership agreement is to request the Board’s lawyer, Peter Loucks, to draft a new agreement. Board members are to review the proposed changes and send any comments to Warren Dickert and the Manager within one week. If no comments are received, it will be assumed that Board members agree with the proposed changes.

**9. Other Business**

Ed McGugan informed the Board that he had read a detailed report from the Municipal Innovation Council containing a comment about SMART which could easily be misinterpreted and possibly presented in the media as negative, leading to the issue having to be managed by the President and the Manager. Mike Myatt noted that words matter and it is important to take care in choosing them,

particularly as the Board and the Manager have worked hard and have been able to reduce the municipal contribution to SMART.

**10. Adjournment**

Mike Myatt thanked Mark Davis for joining the meeting as an alternate for Doug Bell.

Moved by John Woodbury; Seconded by Ed McGugan  
That the Board of Directors of SMART adjourn at 2:32 p.m.

**Carried**

**Recording Secretary Meeting Attendance**

The Recording Secretary attended the following meetings in the second quarter of 2021:

- April 9, 2021 (HR Committee)
- April 23, 2021
- June 25, 2021

  
Mike Myatt, Meeting Chair

  
Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

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These minutes are considered to be in draft form until signed by the President and the Recording Secretary

# **SAUGEEN MOBILITY**

## **and REGIONAL TRANSIT**

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### **GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Friday, July 23, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

**Board Members Present:** Councillor Doug Bell, Municipality of Arran-Elderslie  
Councillor Warren Dickert, Town of Hanover Councillor  
Dean Leifso, Municipality of Brockton  
Councillor Beth Hamilton, Municipality of West Grey  
Mayor Scott Mackey, Township of Chatsworth  
Councillor Ed McGugan, Township of Huron-Kinloss  
Vice Deputy Mayor Mike Myatt, Town of Saugeen Shores  
Mayor John Woodbury, Township of Southgate

**Board Members Absent:** Councillor Dave Cuyler, Municipality of Kincardine

**Others Present:** Roger Cook, Manager  
Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

The meeting was conducted by videoconference in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**1. Call to Order**

President Warren Dickert called the meeting order at 1:31 p.m..

**2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

**Motion #2021-046**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Beth Hamilton

That the agenda for July 23, 2021 be amended to add items 9. A., Grey Bruce Health Unit Statement on Business and Vaccine, and 9.B., Insurance, and that the agenda be accepted as amended.

**Carried**

**4. Minutes of the June 25, 2021 General Board Meeting**

**Motion #2021-047**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That the Board approve and adopt the minutes of the June 25, 2021 General Board Meeting as circulated.

**Carried**

**5. Business Arising from the Minutes**

Following up on item 5 from Business Arising from the June 25, 2021 minutes, the President noted that some responses have been received from the mailing campaign. Grey Highlands has invited the Manager to its September 15, 2021 Council meeting, with the President to attend if he is available. The Town of Blue Mountains has requested an information package, and no response has yet been received from Bruce County.

The Manager provided an update on item 6.A., Email from a Client, noting that SMART does not track whether a client is visually impaired, but tracks clients by the type of vehicle they require. Anecdotally however, staff is aware of clients' needs. Visually impaired clients generally have mechanisms to ensure that they get information that is provided in written form.

With respect to the Proposed Incident Reporting Policy, the President noted that the item is on the current agenda, along with the Return of the Dispatcher/Scheduler.

With respect to the Partnership Agreement, no comments have been received on the proposed revisions and the next step is to work on a revised agreement with the Board's lawyer.

Ed McGugan referred to the statement in the minutes that changes to service levels were posted on SMART's web site, noting that he had been unable to find this information. The Manager noted that the information is included in a bright red band at the top of the home page, but there had been some trouble with the web site. He agreed to look into what happened to the information.

**6. Correspondence**

There were no current items of correspondence.

**7. Manager's Reports and Recommendations**

**A. Report 2021-18 June 2021 Operational**

The Manager presented the report noting that rides and user fees are increasing and group excursions are coming back.

The President asked about that each ride taking at least two phone calls, which could be onerous. The Manager said that this is the nature of the business, and some clients do not always have all the required information when they book and so have to call back, and some call to find out the driver's name, or to confirm details of their ride. These calls are in addition to the large number of calls coming in, many of which in turn generate outgoing calls. The President asked if there is an application that might reduce the number of calls and the Manager said he did not believe so. Dean Leifso said that in his business, some clients prefer to call to clarify issues or obtain additional details following a first contact. The President noted that this may present an opportunity to educate clients.

With respect to group excursions, the President asked if the costs of these are tracked. The Manager responded that they are often short runs, to the grocery store for example, and the cost is not a lot more than the \$804 in fees, and once gas tax is taken into account, these trips make a profit.

**Motion #2021-048**

Moved by Beth Hamilton; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That Report 2021-18 June 2021 Operational be approved as presented.

**Carried**

**B. Report 2021-19 2021 First Half Operational**

The Manager presented the report, noting that the situation is as solid as it can be given COVID-19 and there is a substantial amount in the gas tax account, although it is unknown what will happen with the gas tax in 2022, as there have been suggestions that it may be reduced by 25%. So this is a question, along with how quickly ridership will come back to previous levels.

With respect to the Municipal Transit Enhanced Cleaning Program (MTEC), SMART has received the full \$30,995 which is a onetime payment and the funds are shown on the balance sheet. The Manager added that incidental expenses for cleaning such as a package of disinfectant wipes, are not necessarily tracked.

**Motion #2021-049**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Dean Leifso

That Report 2021-19 2021 First Half Operational be approved as presented.

**Carried**

**C. 2021-20 Automation Potential with Novus**

The Manager presented the report, explaining that Novus can schedule rides, but only if they have a set return time, which is not always the case with SMART clients. He outlined additional potential uses as outlined in the report, explaining that very few clients would likely use the automatic features, and there would be no benefit to adding them at this point.

Beth Hamilton asked if Novus is doing what was hoped for. The Manager said that when it was purchased, everything was done manually by one person, but now, any staff member can use Novus. This system allows some data to be extracted, but it is only as good as the information input into it. The main advantage is having a central location where any staff member can log in and see rides on the screen, and where vehicles are, for example. Novus also allows effective communication with drivers through their phones. Overall, Novus does what was hoped it would do, although there are other things that could be done. This system was originally developed for the school bus industry which is a structured ride environment, versus SMART which is unstructured.

Mike Myatt recalled that Novus cost \$120,000 and he asked if SMART was getting value for the money spent. The Manager said that the system is highly regarded and SMART did not overspend in purchasing it. Home and Community Support Services and KTransit both use it and it cost less than \$100,000 which was funded by the federal government. He believes that it is a good system that will last a long time. The maintenance fees for Novus are \$18,000/year.

Beth Hamilton suggested that there are likely people in the SMART system who could book their own rides in the same way that people can book COVID vaccinations, and that this is something that people such as family members of clients, might expect. She suggested a phased in implementation might be the way to go and would like to hear from Novus about this.

Ed McGugan said that he has experience purchasing expensive software, and it is common to use only a portion of a system as such systems are written for a large audience. He asked if there is a way to educate SMART clients so that they can book their own rides online and raised the issue of whether it would be worthwhile to spend additional funds on more automation.

The Manager said that there is a “book a ride” function on SMART’s web site which is electronic but not automated, so if people use it, the information then has to be input into Novus. He said that many of SMART’s clients prefer to talk to a person to book a ride, some do not have a cell phone and have no interest in getting one, and some do not have a computer. Many client registrations are done by phone, some clients do not have credit cards, and in some cases cash is given to drivers, and even sometimes sent in the mail. He is more than willing to use a ride booking app, but believes that clients like to speak to a person and if there was an app to book rides, only a small number would use it. The Novus system had to be purchased as a whole, and it is not possible to purchase only some modules. Updates to the system cost \$40,000, and it cannot be tried on a trial basis without spending that amount.

John Woodbury suggested keeping an eye on the industry as a lot of things in the IT world change quickly, as was seen as a result of COVID. He suggested a mixed system given the clientele, adding that more people are now accustomed to using technology due to COVID, as was seen in Southgate where more people attend virtual Council meetings than attended in person prior to the pandemic. He suggested that it may be a matter of education and active monitoring of the situation to see what will work. Dean Leifso agreed with John Woodbury, noting that he had a client who was paying their SMART bill by dropping off a cheque because they preferred the personal touch, but reported having difficulty finding SMART due to the signage not being obvious. He suggested looking for a hybrid solution that would allow both the personal touch and use of technology.

The President noted that the Board received the report for information and would monitor the situation for developments.

**D. 2021-21 Incident Reporting Policy Revised**

The Manager presented the report noting that the changes as requested at the last meeting had been incorporated, along with a form. Mike Myatt said he likes the form and asked about documenting near misses. It was pointed out that the form does provide for documenting near misses. Scott Mackey said that he is satisfied with the form and suggested that there should be space for the driver to sign and date it, as well as space for the Manager to sign and date it, a suggestion that was endorsed by the President.

Beth Hamilton asked if there are ever circumstances where drivers have to call a client's next of kin and asked if SMART collects this kind of information. The Manager said that in case of a collision, the driver would call the office, and on the weekend, would call the Manager. He added that there is a policy to cover emergencies that outlines how to proceed and in serious cases, the Manager would call the President, if, for example there was media interest.

**Motion #2021-050**

Moved by Ed McGugan; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That the Board approve the Incident Reporting Policy and that the form be amended to incorporate spaces for the driver to sign and date the form, and for the Manager, or other reviewer, to also sign and date the form.

**Carried**

**E. 2021-22 Return of Dispatcher/Scheduler Revised**

This report was referred to the closed session of the meeting.

**F. 2021-23 Lifting Load Restrictions**

The Manager presented the report, noting that it seems pointless to restrict loads if the riders are all from the same congregate setting. He suggested that lifting the load restrictions would apply only to group excursions from a single location, not individual rides from different locations. Scott Mackey suggested that this might be worth considering but not at the present time given the COVID counts in Grey Bruce.

Beth Hamilton said it seems logical but that the Manager should check with the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit. She suggested the Board could support it in principle, depending on the position of Public Health. The Manager was directed to contact the Public Health Unit and report back to the Board by email. The President noted that if Public Health gives the green light, the Board can approve the report electronically without having to call a meeting.

Later in the meeting, the information from the Public Health Unit was located and circulated. A statement sent to long term care licensees and retirement homes says that there are to be no excursions for long term care residents. It was agreed that if there are requests for excursions for long term care residents, the appropriate response is that SMART cannot provide such a service based on direction from the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. Arra.

The President noted that as a result, SMART should suspend group rides until further notice from the Medical Officer of Health.

**8. Annual Wage & Salary Review Policy**

**Motion #2021-051**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by John Woodbury

That the Board of Directors of SMART approve the Annual Wage & Salary Review Policy as presented.

**Carried**

**9. Other Business**

**A. Grey Bruce Health Unit Statement on Business and Vaccine**

Beth Hamilton brought to the Board's attention a recent statement from the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit on employees and COVID vaccinations which stated that businesses should strongly encourage their employees to get vaccinated and suggested providing time off to get the vaccine. She forwarded the statement by email to Board members and the Manager and said that she is in favour of having a policy to demonstrate support for vaccinations.

The Manager said that SMART does not have a vaccination policy and does strongly encourage staff to get vaccinated, although some staff are hesitant. He explained that if staff who are currently not vaccinated are provided with paid time off to get the vaccine, this would be unfair to those who have already gotten the vaccination on their own time.

John Woodbury noted that a presentation to County Council showed that 95% of the COVID cases that arose in the first two weeks of July were in people who were not vaccinated and that herd immunity with the Delta variant is 95%, compared to 75% prior to the appearance of the variant.

Scott Mackey suggested following up with Dr. Arra who has changed his position on vaccine passports and now agrees with them. According to the province's Science Table, the COVID situation is evolving, and as a result there may be changes to come since the unvaccinated are getting sick, and proof of vaccination may become mandatory in order to access services. The Manager asked whether a vaccination policy would apply only to COVID or to other vaccines. It was suggested that he ask this question when following up with Public Health on the question of lifting load restrictions.

The President noted that this issue is to be followed up at the next Board meeting.

**B. Insurance**

The Manager explained that the recent bill for fleet insurance showed an increase of 38%. The companies providing the insurance have been purchased by another insurance company. The Manager checked with a different company which declined the insurance and with another which would charge more than the current rate. A similar service to SMART operating in the Kitchener area with fewer vehicles pays more than SMART for its insurance, although the driving environment there is quite different. If the deductible were increased to \$5,000 for all perils, there may be a reduction in the premium. It is rare, however, for losses to exceed \$3,000 to \$4,000, and in such cases SMART pays for the repairs rather than making an insurance claim. Losses over the last 10 years have been about \$20,000 and the largest claims in the last 10 years have been where other drivers hit SMART vehicles.

SMART has in the past paid \$60,000 for fleet insurance and the recent renewal is \$85,000. The newly purchased vehicles have been added to the policy, older vehicles are not covered for all perils, and for those older than 6 years, all perils are dropped because they are fully depreciated. An increase in the deductible to \$5,000 would result in a \$2,400 savings. There are 31 vehicles on the policy, with the four to be sold having been removed.

**Motion #2021-052**

Moved by John Woodbury; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That the Board of Directors of SMART approve renewing the fleet insurance with an increase in the deductible on all perils to \$5,000.

**Carried**

**Closed Session**

**Motion #2021-IC011**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Mike Myatt

That the Board of Directors of SMART move into Closed Session at 2:50 p.m. to discuss issues regarding identifiable individuals.

**Carried**

**Reconvene in Open Session**

**Motion #2021-IC012**

Moved by Ed McGugan; Seconded by John Woodbury

That the Board of Directors of SMART reconvene in Open Session at 2:58 p.m..

**Carried**

**Motion #2021-053**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by John Woodbury

That the Board of Directors of SMART authorize the Manager to bring SMART's Dispatcher/Scheduler back to work full-time on Monday, August 30, 2021.

**Carried**

**10. Adjournment**

It was agreed that the meeting scheduled for August 27 is to be rescheduled to October 1, 2021.

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That the Board of Directors of SMART adjourn at 2:59 p.m.

**Carried**

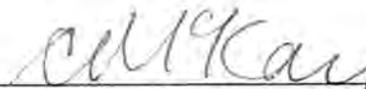
**Recording Secretary Meeting Attendance**

The Recording Secretary attended the following meetings in the third quarter of 2021:

- July 23, 2021



Warren Dickert, President



Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

# **SAUGEEN MOBILITY**

## **and REGIONAL TRANSIT**

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### **GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Friday, October 1, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

**Board Members Present:** Councillor Doug Bell, Municipality of Arran-Elderslie  
Councillor Warren Dickert, Town of Hanover Councillor  
Dean Leifso, Municipality of Brockton  
Councillor Beth Hamilton, Municipality of West Grey  
Mayor Scott Mackey, Township of Chatsworth  
Councillor Ed McGugan, Township of Huron-Kinloss  
Vice Deputy Mayor Mike Myatt, Town of Saugeen Shores  
Mayor John Woodbury, Township of Southgate

**Board Members Absent:** Councillor Dave Cuyler, Municipality of Kincardine

**Others Present:** Roger Cook, Manager  
Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

The meeting was conducted by videoconference in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**1. Call to Order**

President Warren Dickert called the meeting order at 1:30 p.m..

**2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

**Motion #2021-054**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That the agenda for October 1, 2021 be accepted as circulated.

**Carried**

**4. Minutes of the July 23, 2021 General Board Meeting**

**Motion #2021-055**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That the Board approve and adopt the minutes of the July 23, 2021 General Board Meeting as circulated.

**Carried**

**5. Business Arising from the Minutes**

On item 7 F, Lifting Load Restrictions, the Manager reported that SMART is still doing group excursions subject to a 50% load restriction, so the groups are smaller. The load restrictions also apply to individual rides.

**6. Correspondence**

**A. Email from Miguel Pelletier – Bruce County**

The Manager informed the Board that he has emailed Miguel Pelletier's office three times with no response. The President noted that the lower tier municipalities seem to be on board, but the situation with the County is not clear. He also pointed out that there had been no response from three municipalities following SMART's letter writing campaign. Mike Myatt pointed out that the staff and political perspectives may be different, and a political initiative may be required to move things along. He noted that there was a unanimous vote at County Council in response to SMART's May 2020 presentation and the staff do not seem to be in a rush, and progress will be slow without a political initiative. The President requested that the Manager continue to follow up and keep the lines of communication open. The Manager suggested that it might be useful to meet with the

Bruce County Mayors as any decisions will be made by Councils. Mike Myatt suggested that more information may be required for the County to make a decision so that it is clear what it is being asked to approve and suggested the possibility of a feasibility study. The President noted that SMART had hoped to be part of the County's Transportation Master Plan but was not invited to participate in developing the Plan which has now been approved. He suggested SMART needs to keep this issue alive in order to get a response.

Ed McGugan noted that the report suggested the use of a software application, so it is looking to the future, although it is vague. He agreed that SMART is taking the right approach in making the County aware of its presence and efforts should work towards a real solution for people rather than something vague.

Scott Mackey suggested that the issue needs to be driven politically and a Notice of Motion to Council could direct the issue back to the County. He added that the Master Plan is an overarching document and since SMART is a specialized transit service, Council would have to request a staff report on specialized transit. John Woodbury suggested that SMART members from Bruce County speak to their Mayors to see what is required to advance the issue. The President requested that the Bruce County members approach their Mayors for feedback and guidance on how to move ahead and that they report back at the next SMART meeting so the Board can plan its next steps.

Beth Hamilton joined the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

## **7. Manager's Reports and Recommendations**

### **A. Report 2021-24 July 2021 Operational**

The Manager presented the report.

#### **Motion #2021-056**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by John Woodbury

That Report 2021-24 July 2021 Operational be approved as presented.

**Carried**

### **B. Report 2021-25 2021 August Operational**

The Manager presented the report, noting that rides were down due to the heat in August. Based on preliminary numbers for September, rides appear to be up about 20%. He informed the Board of two incidents in August, neither of which caused injury. In one incident, a gate at a facility closed on the top of a vehicle, and in the second, an unsecured object fell onto the roadway in front of the SMART vehicle. No damage occurred, but the OPP were alerted due to the unsecured load.

#### **Motion #2021-057**

Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That Report 2021-25 2021 August Operational be approved as presented.

**Carried**

### **C. 2021-26 Proposed Grey Highlands Contract**

The Manager and Beth Hamilton met with Grey Highlands which expressed a keen interest. Beth Hamilton noted that the Manager did a great job responding to questions and Council wanted a full package of information to go to its Committee with a focus on those aged 65 and over. Scott Mackey asked if questions were asked about cost projections after the first year, adding that Grey Highlands has one long term care facility which is large. The Manager responded that they are aware that cost is based on population and that their share will increase. He emphasized that he had tried to make it clear that the \$24,000 cost in the first year is a starting point. Beth Hamilton confirmed that the Manager had made this clear.

**Motion #2021-058**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That the Board of Directors of SMART approve the contract and have it sent to the Clerk at the Municipality of Grey Highlands for their consideration.

**Carried**

**D. 2021-27 9-Passenger Buses**

The Manager presented the report highlighting the price increases and SMART's contribution to the purchase of \$62,136. Scott Mackey asked if it would be better to have two 9 passenger vans SMART rather than an 18 passenger van, to provide more flexibility. The Manager inherited the 18 passenger vehicle and does not disagree that two 9 passenger vehicles might provide more flexibility. The President noted that the new vehicles need to be ordered before October 30, 2021 and the Board should have more detail before going ahead. Beth Hamilton noted that the item could be deferred to the next meeting on October 22, so that the Board could look at its options in terms of the mix of vehicles and what the situation would be if it had to stick to the budget. The Manager noted that a commitment to buy vehicles under ICIP has been made, and it is not clear if SMART can opt out of that commitment. Three vehicles remain to be purchased and the Manager agreed that more detail can be provided.

The matter was deferred to the October 22, 2021 meeting.

**E. 2021-28 Vehicle Sales**

The Manager presented the report, noting that the funds realized from the sale will help offset the cost of the new vehicles. The proceeds of the sale will go into the gas tax account and be reflected in the numbers presented at the next meeting. The report was received for information.

**F. 2021-29 Benchmarking Statistical Analysis**

The Manager presented the report, noting the following points from the analysis: SMART has more vehicles per population than the average, but operates in a larger area; its municipal contribution is below the average and it is more dependent on user fees; and its expenses are below the provincial average. In summary, he stated that SMART is well run financially. He will include this information in the Business Plan which is being prepared with the assistance of Jenelle Bannon of Bruce County who agreed that this analysis is important information. The report was received for information.

**8. Pay & Benefits Policy**

Catherine McKay noted that the HR Committee had requested amendments at its meeting of April 9, 2021 which are shown in red font in the policy presented.

Scott Mackey asked the Manager about how hours worked annually are tracked, noting that they impact the cost of health benefits. He would like to see a requirement that employees maintain 1,000 hours per year in order to remain on the plan. The Manager explained that employees have to work 1,500 hours to be enrolled in the plan, it can take several years to reach this threshold, and staff are only dropped from the plan if they request that their hours be reduced. Some employees have not met the 1,500 hour threshold in four years of working. Mike Myatt asked why it would be 1,000 hours compared to 1,500. Scott Mackey stated that this allows some flexibility and employees who are not providing service should not be covered by the benefits plan. In response to a question from the President, the Manager stated that about 12 out of 24 employees are currently on the benefits plan, which includes all office staff and 9 drivers, representing about half of the staff, most of whom are drivers.

The Manager explained that employees have to work 1,500 in the most recent 12 month period to be enrolled in the benefits plan and complete a continuous waiting period of one year. The President stated that the discussion seemed to revolve around what the requirement is to remain on the plan, and Scott

Mackey noted that the policy does not state what this requirement is. Catherine McKay explained that the benefits booklet states that after completing a continuous waiting period of 1 year, a permanent employee who continues to actively work at least 24 hours per week is eligible for the particular type of insurance coverage, and that 24 hours per week is different from 1,500 or 1,000 hours per year. Ed McGugan recommended that the HR Committee review the matter and make recommendations to the Board. Scott Mackey agreed, noting that he believed that the 24 hours per week requirement was new information. The Manager stated that the Benefits Booklet can be amended. Mike Myatt said that 1,200 hours per year would be acceptable, noting that this requirement is different from the 24 hours per week in the booklet. As Chair of the HR Committee, he said that he could call a meeting to review the matter. John Woodbury stated that the Benefits Booklet and the policy should be the same, and that the requirement should be 1,200 hours per year to remain on the benefits plan.

Beth Hamilton asked about the process to track employee hours and whether people would be affected immediately. The Manager stated that he can go back in the payroll records to get the required information and employees would only be dropped from the plan if their hours do not meet the threshold as a result of their request that their hours be reduced, rather than as a result of a reduction in work. Beth Hamilton noted that clear language is required in the policy or it will be difficult to administer.

The Board agreed that employees must work a minimum of 1,200 hours per year in order to maintain their benefit coverage and that such wording is to be included in the policy which is to be reconsidered at the October 22, 2021 Board meeting.

Beth Hamilton asked about the statement in the policy that the weekend begins at 5:00 p.m. on Friday. The Manager stated that it has no effect due to implemented service level changes and could be taken out, but also could remain in case service levels change.

With respect to the EAP being available on employees' cell phones, Warren Dickert asked if all office staff have SMART provided cell phones. The Manager responded that they do in order to respond immediately to drivers by phone or text in case of breakdowns. He also noted that the office staff carry their phones with them when not in the office to be able to respond in case of emergency. The phones cost \$55.00 per month and have a large pool of data and time, so the cost is not significant.

With respect to the statutory holidays in the policy, John Woodbury suggested adding the Civic Holiday, which is the first Monday in August. The Manager estimated the cost to be about \$3,000 in holiday pay plus \$500 - \$1,000 for time and a half. He was directed to calculate the cost of treating this day as a public holiday, which requires all employees be paid for the day and those who work, to be paid time and a half and present that information at the October 22, 2021 meeting.

**Motion #2021-059**

Moved by Beth Hamilton

That the benefit plan be amended to require employees to work 1,200 hours per year in order to maintain group insurance coverage.

Due to the lack of a seconder, the motion was not brought before the Board for consideration.

**9. COVID-19 Vaccination Policy**

Catherine McKay presented the policy, noting that it is practical and serves to control the spread of COVID. She added that there were recently new cases according to the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit and so the virus is still active and being transmitted. The intent of the policy is to protect SMART staff and clients from COVID.

Scott Mackey suggested adding a requirement that proof of vaccination must show that the vaccination was administered at least 14 days previously. He added the Grey County's policy addresses medical

exemptions, and the Manager explained that a person with a medical exemption would not be exempt from testing, so there is no need for the policy to explicitly address medical exemptions. Beth Hamilton felt that the policy was good and asked when and how it would take effect. The Manager said that it would take effect the date Board approval is given and would be emailed to staff and provided to them in paper copy if necessary. Dean Leifso noted that hospitals are starting to implement such policies that allow no exemptions, and if staff do not provide proof of vaccination, they are no longer employed. He asked how employees provide their test results given that many take SMART vehicles home at night. The Manager explained that they can email their test results to him. In response to a question from Beth Hamilton, the Manager noted that COVID screening continues through the use of screening questions, and consideration is being given to doing this electronically. A question arose about the screening forms that SMART has retained and Dean Leifso said that it may be able to destroy some of these records, but it should check with the Grey Bruce Public Health Unit as to retention requirements. Ed McGugan asked about who is required to do a Rapid Antigen Test and the Manager explained that only those who do not provide proof of vaccination and are working or entering SMART premises, and it was clarified that the policy requires employees to pay for these tests which are available from Shoppers Drug Mart. Doug Bell stated that this policy is a positive step and some organizations are not recognizing its importance on the basis that an employer cannot ask about vaccination status.

**Motion #2021-060**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by John Woodbury

That the second bullet point on page 2 of the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy be amended to state as follows: Proof issued by the Ontario Ministry of Health of full COVID-19 vaccine administration, the vaccine having been administered more than 14 days previously.

**Carried**

**10. Revised SMART Partnership Agreement**

The President explained that the Executive Committee had reviewed the agreement and suggested changes as highlighted in the meeting package. These were sent out for comments, with no comments having been received.

Concern was expressed about the withdrawal clause due to the internal workings of municipal councils, rather than the value of SMART. Discussion occurred about the right to vote, and it was suggested that as long as a municipality is a member, it should have the right to vote. Dean Leifso said that he could see the reasoning behind section 9.3, given that certainty is desirable. Several Board members disagreed with sections 9.2, 9.3 and 9.4. Warren Dickert said that 9.2 and 9.3 came out of a desire to come up with language to create stability and prevent the giving of notice to leave every year. Beth Hamilton pointed to a situation where all nine partners give notice, and the intent of the new section is to strengthen the partnership. She suggested that 9.3 could be changed such that notice could not be given in successive years as a means to ensure a stable and accountable partnership. Dean Leifso suggested a two year notice period, with opting out being allowed only twice per council term, removing the option of an annual withdrawal. Scott Mackey pointed out that Arran-Elderslie, Chatsworth and Southgate have all given notice, but in fact are still at the table. John Woodbury said that Southgate does not belong to a lot of partnerships and due to its size has that many fewer areas where costs could be cut. He believes the option should remain yearly but a decision to leave should be explainable. He also feels that this might have some effect if Grey Highlands were to join. He concluded that it would be a problem for Southgate if 9.2 and 9.3 were included in the agreement.

Beth Hamilton pointed out that the Board should also consider the question of stability for clients who might be left in the lurch by a municipality's decision to leave the partnership and she suggested looking for some middle ground.

Dean Leifso raised concerns regarding proposed clause 7.6, stating that if SMART went over its budget, this could be grounds for a partner to claim a breach of the agreement. Beth Hamilton said that the clause might be good Board policy but does not belong in the agreement.

Dean Leifso raised a question about proposed clause 4.2, asking how much notice was provided this year. The Manager noted that changes went into effect March 1 and notice was issued with the January billings, so in effect, the notice was less than 60 days. Dean Leifso suggested that this issue should be covered in a policy and not in the partnership agreement. He stated that 180 days would be a very long notice period and questioned if it was realistic.

On proposed clause 7.3, Beth Hamilton questioned whether agreements would be returned in time given the timeline. The Manager agreed that it would be difficult since it could take more than six months to get the agreement circulated to all Councils.

The President pointed out that the CAO of the Town of Hanover suggested that the title under the signature lines be changed to "CAO/Clerk", as some municipalities have a Clerk rather than a CAO.

Dean Leifso suggested that the reference to SMART should be "Hereinafter called "The Corporation"" rather than "Hereinafter called "S.M.A.R.T".

**Motion #2021-061**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That proposed clause 9.2 Withdrawal of a Member not be added to the partnership agreement.

**Carried**

**Motion #2021-062**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That proposed clause 9.4 Withdrawal of a Member be added to the partnership agreement.

**Carried**

**Motion #2021-063**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by John Woodbury

That proposed clause 9.3 Withdrawal of a Member not be added to the partnership agreement.

**Carried**

The Manager suggested changing "once" to "twice" as a compromise. Scott Mackey raised a point of order in that he had made a motion that had been seconded and should therefore be voted upon. A vote was held and the motion was carried.

**Motion #2021-064**

Moved by Beth Hamilton; Seconded by John Woodbury

That proposed clause 7.6 Funding not be added to the partnership agreement and that the Manager prepare and present a policy that no more than 60% of anticipated MTO Gas Tax funding shall be budgeted each year for any operational deficit.

**Carried**

**Motion #2021-065**

Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by Beth Hamilton

That proposed clause 4.2 Policy Development not be added to the partnership agreement.

**Carried**

**Motion #2021-066**

Moved by Beth Hamilton; Seconded by Doug Bell

That proposed clause 7.3 Funding be amended to delete the year 2022 and add the year 2025 such that the years covered include 2023, 2024 and 2025 and that the amended clause be added to the partnership agreement.

**Carried**

**Motion #2021-067**

Moved by Beth Hamilton

That the partnership agreement be amended to include a clause that a partner may only rescind a withdrawal once per council term.

Due to the lack of a seconder, the motion was not brought before the Board for consideration.

Beth Hamilton informed the Board that she had consulted with the CAO of West Grey about the most effective way to bring the agreement to Council. She suggested that an executive summary of the changes and the rationale for them be prepared, and that it include an example of the calculations of how the ratios affect contribution, with a Zoom meeting to review the summary. The President asked what the past practice has been and the Manager explained that a CAO roundtable was held every year before the end of June, although this did not take place during the pandemic. Beth Hamilton agreed that this would be a good next step.

**Motion #2021-068**

Moved by Beth Hamilton

That the Board approve the partnership agreement as amended and that it be sent to Councils for their consideration.

Due to the lack of a seconder, the motion was not brought before the Board for consideration.

Discussion ensued as to who should sign and whether SMART representatives should sign first. Concern was expressed that Councils might want to make changes to the agreement, and John Woodbury suggested that Board representatives should sign and then send it to Councils. Dean Leifso said that if SMART votes to sign it and it comes back with feedback from Councils, this will create a back and forth situation that would be difficult to bring to a conclusion. Mike Myatt said that Saugeen Shores could be concerned about rising costs.

The Board reviewed two spreadsheets that the Manager had circulated prior to the meeting, one showing the effect of adding kilometers to the 2021 contributions from October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020, and the second showing the effect of adding kilometers to the 2021 contribution from October 1, 2018 to September 30, 2019. Beth Hamilton stated that conversations with CAOs are very important and the increase for Saugeen Shores appeared to be moderate. Mike Myatt agreed that this appears to be the case.

Beth Hamilton proposed that an updated partnership agreement be submitted to the next meeting so that the Board can see the changes, and that the costings be reviewed by the Executive Committee to ensure that they will be clear for Councils. Scott Mackey agreed, stating that the calculations have to be simplified so that the partners can see what they are paying today and what they will pay in the future. The President concluded that it is important that all parties are well and clearly informed. It was agreed that the Executive Committee will work on the issue.

**11. Open SMART Meetings to the Public**

The President introduced the issue by saying that it is not entirely clear if the Municipal Act requires SMART meetings to be open to the public, but proposed that the simplest approach is to make them public. Dean Leifso asked about the cost, and the President noted that notice would be posted on the web site and there would be no cost to doing this. This would be consistent with the practice of the Saugeen

Municipal Airport Commission which posts its agendas and notice of meetings on its web site, along with information as to the location of the meeting, either in person or by Zoom. Discussion turned to SMART's by-law as a possible authority on whether meetings should be public. The Manager said it was put in place in January 2010, although it was unclear whether it in fact has been passed. The Recording Secretary agreed to email the by-law to Board members.

The Board agreed to develop a policy on ensuring that SMART Board meetings are open to the public.

**12. Other Business**

**A. Town of the Blue Mountains Presentation**

The Manager and the President attended Blue Mountains Council on September 21, 2021. The President stated that the presentation was well done, and although the level of interest did not seem to be strong, it was a good sign to receive a response to the letter writing campaign. The Manager suggested visiting Georgian Bluffs as well, and added that Owen Sound and Meaford are have contracts with First Student for their specialized transit which expire in 2023.

In further matters of Other Business, Mike Myatt asked when the 2022 budget would be presented. The Manager confirmed that a proposed budget will be presented at the October 22, 2021 meeting. Mike Myatt further asked about the status of an office staff member who resigned, and the Manager explained that the position had been advertised at the YMCA in Hanover and Owen Sound, and as a result a suitable candidate was identified and hired on contract until March. This person has been on board for one month so far and is doing well in the job. They will only be available until the end of July, so the issue of a vacancy at that time will have to be addressed.

**13. Adjournment**

The President thanked Board Members for their patience in covering a significant amount of important material.

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Ed McGugan  
That the Board of Directors of SMART adjourn at 4:05 p.m.  
**Carried**



Warren Dickert, President



Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

# **SAUGEEN MOBILITY**

## **and REGIONAL TRANSIT**

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### **GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Friday, October 29, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

**Board Members Present:** Councillor Warren Dickert, Town of Hanover Councillor, Board President  
Councillor Beth Hamilton, Municipality of West Grey, Board Vice-President  
Vice Deputy Mayor Mike Myatt, Town of Saugeen Shores, Board Past President  
Councillor Dave Cuyler, Municipality of Kincardine  
Deputy Mayor Mark Davis, Municipality of Arran-Elderslie (for Doug Bell)  
Councillor Jim Frew, Township of Southgate  
Dean Leifso, Municipality of Brockton  
Mayor Scott Mackey, Township of Chatsworth  
Councillor Ed McGugan, Township of Huron-Kinloss

**Board Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Roger Cook, Manager  
Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

**Guests:** Kym Bruce, Senior Group Marketing Representative, RWAM Insurance  
Administrators, Elmira  
Justin Bumstead, President/Group Benefits Specialist, Bumstead Insurance Ltd.,  
Owen Sound

The meeting was conducted by videoconference in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### **1. Call to Order**

President Warren Dickert called the meeting order at 1:30 p.m. and welcomed new Board Member Jim Frew and Mark Davis.

#### **2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None declared.

#### **3. Approval of the Agenda**

##### **Motion #2021-069**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That the agenda for October 29, 2021 be accepted as circulated.

**Carried**

The Manager noted that on item 8C, the best price provided by Girardin Blue Bird is locked in until 3:00 p.m.. The Manager outlined the history of vehicle purchases for the benefit of new Board members, noting that more funding will come available from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program (ICIP). Applications must be submitted by early 2024 and he has been working with Chris Walker, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer for the Town of Hanover, to obtain funding for future SMART vehicles.

#### **4. Presentation by RWAM Insurance Administrators**

The Chair introduced Ms. Bruce and Mr. Bumstead who is the broker for the benefits plan and handles the renewals. The presentation was arranged to put the Board's mind at ease given questions that have arisen with respect to eligibility and continuing to qualify for benefits.

Mr. Bumstead presented a Schedule of Benefits, noting that RWAM is the third party benefits administrator. He reviewed the insurance which includes life, accidental death and dismemberment, long term disability, extended health care, critical illness and an employee assistance program. The insurance

is premium based, and employees pay the premiums through payroll deductions, except for extended health care and dental care, which is self-insured.

The following points were made by Ms. Bruce.

- The eligibility criteria to join the plan is set by SMART. SMART's criteria are non-typical. Typical criteria are usually three, or six months, or one year plus a minimum number of hours worked. The key is the 24 hours of work per week, with 20 hours per week as the minimum to be eligible for long term disability insurance. Some organizations have requirements of 20, 30 or 40 hours per week, and groups with part-time employees might have a minimum of 15 hours per week, but this would not apply to long term disability. If the plan is not meeting SMART's needs, it can be changed.
- It is tricky to get on the plan given SMART's eligibility criteria, although the requirement to work a certain number of hours could be reduced. The concern is staying on the plan and who monitors that. For example, an employee who is only working 15 hours per week is not eligible for long term disability insurance. SMART should stick to the plan guidelines to avoid issues regarding long term disability claims down the road since the eligibility criteria must be met to have a claim approved. The SMART benefits booklet says that employees must work 24 hours per week to be eligible.
- If employees are removed from the plan and then put back on, they tend to use the plan as much as they can when they are covered, which would have a negative effect on experience, which determines the cost. It is important when qualifying employees or taking them off the plan that such decisions are supported by the terms of the insurance policy, documented as to how they will be handled, and all handled in the same manner, rather than being decided as situations arise.
- Extended health care for SMART employees is self-insured on an Administrative Services Only (ASO) basis. This means that RWAM facilitates payment of claims and invoices SMART for the amount paid out in claims plus an administrative fee. Both single and family coverage are provided for Extended Health Care and Dental Care. Employees who opt for family coverage pay the difference between the cost of single and family coverage. The cost, regardless of whether ASO or fully insured, is based on claims experience. The ASO fund, which is SMART's money, accumulates and there is a monthly reconciliation sent to SMART. The insurance is renewed once a year based the cost for claims in a fully insured plan plus an adjustment for inflation and an adjustment based on claims experience. Mr. Bumstead said he receives a monthly report on the plan.
- The \$15,000 maximum for drugs, is per family, but the limit is the same for an individual. This is not particularly high or low as a limit and some plans offer unlimited drug coverage. There are some very high priced drugs these days, so it is good to have a maximum. Mr. Bumstead added that this limit was put in place several years ago and prior to that there was no limit.
- It is very important that the benefits booklet does what SMART wants for its employees and that its administrative practices match what is in the plan/booklet. There is some leeway in Extended Health and Dental Care as they are self-insured, but for the other benefits there should be no discrepancy or questions about eligibility. She asked what SMART wants its benefits plan to do, how it wants to administer it and when it would like employees to be added to and removed from the plan.
- Eligibility criteria could be changed such that hours are averaged to 24 per week. The Infectious Disease Emergency Leave (IDEL) still applied during COVID and therefore no claims would be denied. However, if an employee was only working in the summer, they would be seasonal and should not be on the benefits plan.
- Outside of IDEL, an employee working 15 hours per week would not be covered because the minimum is 24 hours per week. She added that SMART management is responsible for adding and removing people from the plan and RWAM does not know who should be on or off.

The following points arose as a result of discussion and questions from Board members:

- SMART's practice has been to include employees on the plan if they work 24 hours per week on average or 1,200 hours per year. Employees who request that their hours be reduced such that they do not meet that threshold are removed from the plan. If an employee's hours fall below the threshold through no fault of their own, they are not removed from the plan. This requires a lot of monitoring which is the Manager's responsibility. He added that it is illegal during the COVID pandemic to remove employees' benefits coverage if their hours of work are eliminated or reduced as

a result of COVID. The Manager said that there should be some flexibility to allow people to stay on the plan if there is not enough work and their hours are reduced through no fault of their own. He said that if an employee is making a good faith effort to work and not asking for their hours to be reduced, they should stay on the plan. The less an employee works, the larger the proportion of their pay is taken up by benefit premiums. Ms. McKay noted however, that health and dental insurance is not paid for by employees through premiums deducted from their pay, but by SMART through the Administrative Services Only arrangement.

- The Board should be getting an annual report on the benefit plan as part of its due diligence.
- SMART's workforce is largely part-time and therefore who is on the plan must be monitored.
- Kincardine casual staff have no benefits and full and part time staff have their benefits prorated to hours worked. All benefits are paid for and employees do not pay very much. Benefits provided are what is in the written agreements.
- Mr. Bumstead was asked which of the SMART member municipalities his company provides service to. He said he is not familiar with the municipalities which make up the SMART Board, so would not be able to say, but his organization has a lot of public sector clients.
- The member municipalities could be canvassed and SMART's plan should not go beyond what they have, but should be fair.
- The plan could be changed to 24 hours per week averaged over 3 months for example and Ms. Bruce should be consulted as to whether this would be acceptable.
- The plan should be tailored to non-COVID times.
- RWAM could be asked to help with wording changes and an analysis could be done to find out over what period of time it would take an employee to work 24 hours per week on average.
- LTD is for wages and there was a question about whether it would be the same for a full time employee as for a part time employee.
- Dean Leifso suggested having insurance as an agenda item at a future meeting to make recommendations as to coverage and the ASO arrangement.

The President thanked Ms. Bruce and Mr. Bumstead for their information and noted that the presentation was for information only.

Due to time requirements to place the bus order, the Board deviated from the agenda to consider item 8 C.

**8. C. 2021-32 2022 Passenger Buses Revised**

**Motion #2021-070**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Mike Myatt

That SMART award the contract to purchase 3 2022 9-passenger buses to Girardin Blue Bird at a cost of \$320,400 plus taxes.

**Carried**

The Board took a short recess after which the Manager confirmed that the order had been placed.

**5. Minutes of the October 1, 2021 General Board Meeting**

**Motion #2021-071**

Moved by Ed McGugan; Seconded by Dean Leifso

That the Board approve and adopt the minutes of the October 1, 2021 General Board Meeting as circulated.

**Carried**

**6. Business Arising from the Minutes**

**Load Restrictions**

According to the Grey Bruce Health Unit, load restrictions can be dropped if SMART requires proof of vaccination from every client. The Manager said that this presents a significant operational issue requiring client files to be updated with vaccination status. He prefers to stay at 50% load restrictions,

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These minutes are considered to be in draft form until signed by the President and the Recording Secretary.

noting that the Province says that restrictions will be lifted on January 17. Dave Cuyler noted that there has been a break out in Kincardine schools, and in light of this, lifting of restrictions may not occur as planned. Beth Hamilton suggested that the Manager speak to his peers about a vaccination passport which he said is being worked on. Mark Davis suggested a report on what others are doing, and the possibility of charging double for clients who are not vaccinated. The President suggested that the Board maintain the status quo on load restrictions for the present.

### **Bruce County Master Transportation Plan**

The Manager met with Bruce County officials Miguel Pelletier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services and Jill Roote, Manager of Economic Development on October 13, 2021. They were supportive of SMART's business plan which is being prepared with the assistance of Jenelle Bannon of Bruce County. Once the business plan is complete, it will be submitted to the Executive Committee as well as Kim Cosgrove at the County, and then back to Mr. Pelletier with recommendations and a report to be reflected in the 2023 budget.

### **Other Issues Arising**

The contract was sent to Grey Highlands but no word has yet been received.

The vaccination policy has been implemented and the testing is working out. One driver has left as a result of not wanting to provide proof of vaccination or take COVID tests. Employees do the tests on their own time and they send a photo of the test, which must be dated, to the Manager.

The Executive Committee met on the partnership agreement which is a complex matter and will be deferred to a special Board meeting in the new year.

Mike Myatt noted that SMART Board meetings are not currently open to the public although the feeling is that they should be, but would there should be some parameters around doing so.

## **7. Correspondence**

Many Board members noted that they had received communications expressing the concerns outlined in the correspondence. In the past, service was virtually 24/7 with rides being provided when clients wanted them. Now, service runs from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Saturday, with no service on Sundays or holidays. The following points were made in the discussion:

- A lot of time was spent reviewing hours of service, but now that the effects of the changes are becoming apparent, it may be time to revisit the results of the Level of Service Review which was meant to ensure that SMART is sustainable.
- The Level of Service Review did a good job of reducing costs and bringing the budget into line, but SMART cannot be everything to everybody.
- The service changes may be harming people's mental and social wellbeing since the ability to get out in the evening and on Sunday is important and there are not a lot of options for SMART's clients.
- There was general agreement that the level of service should be revisited and suggestions were made as to how to address the issue including:
  - Expand into Friday and Saturday nights.
  - Expand into 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday for church services.
  - Offer group excursions outside of regular hours.
  - Operate for profit (rent a bus and driver) for non-member municipalities.
  - Pursue alternate sources of income such as donations, fundraisers and corporate sponsorships.
  - Set a fixed number of hours of operation per week and apply flexibility in how they're used (e.g. give up some time on weekday mornings and add that time to evenings).
  - Stick to core hours and offer service that can be booked at cost recovery for anything beyond.
  - Expand the partnership to other municipalities.
  - Address the issue of "grandfathered" long term care homes which still get excursion service but have money in their budgets for recreation.

**Motion #2021-072**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That the level of SMART service be referred back to the Level of Service Committee to consider the impact of service changes and develop recommendations for further service adjustments for Board consideration.

**Carried**

It was agreed that Board members should send any comments they wish to have taken into account to the Level of Service Committee.

**8. Manager's Reports and Recommendations**

**A. Report 2021-30 September 2021 Operational**

The Manager presented the report noting that ridership was up 20% over August and 25% over September 2020.

**Motion #2021-073**

Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That Report 2021-30 September 2021 Operational be approved as presented.

**Carried**

**B. Report 2021-31 2021 Third Quarter Operational**

The Manager presented the report, noting that group rides are coming back and expenses were down.

**Motion #2021-074**

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That Report 2021-31 2021 Third Quarter Operational be approved as presented.

**Carried**

**C. 2021-32 2022 9-Passenger Buses Revised**

This report was approved earlier in the meeting.

**D. 2021-33 Cost of Adding a Paid Holiday**

This report will be considered as part of the budget process.

**E. 2021-34 Proposed 2022 Operational Budget**

The Manager presented the report, noting increases in fuel and insurance which are not within SMART's control. Discussion covered the following points.

- Estimated increases in municipal contributions for Chatsworth and Arran-Elderslie of 25% and 43% will be difficult to take back to those Councils when 2022 will be a challenging budget year. The increase in the municipal contribution is 23% over 2021, which is quite large. The Manager stated that ridership was down 21.3% overall and down 2.4% in Arran-Elderslie, which caused its share to increase as demonstrated in the spread sheet provided with the report.
- More rides are projected and driver wages are increased, but there is no corresponding increase in user fees. The Manager explained that in 2021 rides did not increase as expected and so he felt it was better to under estimate fees, and many factors affect the level of rides such as the number of local versus longer distances rides which generate more revenue. Also, load restrictions will remain in place and whether clients are taking rides individually or in groups has an impact. He said it is very difficult to predict rides. It was suggested that the budget should be set on the basis pre-COVID levels of expenses.
- The partnership agreement may need to be changed since the contribution is based only on one year's numbers and he would find it very difficult to sell the proposed increase which amounts to 1% of taxes, and perhaps user fees need to be doubled.

- There are only two companies providing insurance for public transit, so there is not a lot of choice or options to reduce the cost.
- The question was asked about why driver wages increase by 15.2% from \$600,000 to \$692,000, but rides are shown as staying the same and why would rides increase but not revenue.
- The question was asked if there was any way to reduce insurance costs, and are they affected by how vehicles are stored (e.g. at employees' homes vs. in a lock-up). The Manager explained that the costs are mostly for liability to cover the high costs of medical treatment. SMART has moved to a \$5,000 deductible on all perils. The insurance renews in the summer and he anticipates an increase next summer over which SMART has no control.
- If the Board is satisfied with the current level of contribution, it should remain as is with future increases based on inflation. All municipal partners experience increases in insurance and fuel and perhaps user fees should increase. The Level of Service changes were made to maintain the \$650,000 contribution and increases in expenses are the new reality, not an anomaly. It should be determined what level of service a contribution of \$650,000 would support. A business case to justify the budget should be made acknowledging increasing costs and showing how SMART will operate within a budget. The current budget asks for a contribution of \$800,000.
- The partnership agreement seems to be driving the numbers up and that this results in an imbalance, a reason to review the agreement.

**Motion #2021-075**

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That SMART's budget for 2022 be based on a municipal contribution of \$682,500, a 5% increase over 2021, and that increases in user fees or reductions in service be instituted if necessary to meet the budget and cover any shortfalls.

**Carried**

**9. Adjournment**

The Board agreed to change the date of the next meeting from November 26, 2021 to December 3, 2021.

The Manager reminded Board members of the requirement in the COVID-19 Vaccination Policy for them to provide proof of vaccination before attending SMART premises.

The President thanked Board Members for their patience in covering a significant amount of important material.

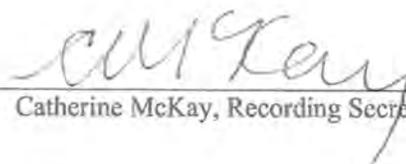
Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Dean Leifso

That the Board of Directors of SMART adjourn at 4:18 p.m.

**Carried**



Warren Dickert, President



Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

These minutes are considered to be in draft form until signed by the President and the Recording Secretary.

# SAUGEEN MOBILITY

## and REGIONAL TRANSIT

### PROPOSED 2022 OPERATIONAL BUDGET as at December 3, 2021

	BUDGET 2021	BUDGET 2022	
Individual Rides	16000	16640	
Group Rides	2000	2500	
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Municipal funding			
Arran-Elderslie	\$ 50,764.38	\$ 62,103.73	\$ 11,339.35
Brockton	\$ 89,813.43	\$ 81,451.92	\$ (8,361.51)
Chatsworth	\$ 51,138.04	\$ 53,873.02	\$ 2,734.98
Hanover	\$ 114,082.94	\$ 128,656.12	\$ 14,573.18
Huron-Kinloss	\$ 44,441.60	\$ 33,266.05	\$ (11,175.55)
Kincardine	\$ 74,967.16	\$ 81,965.96	\$ 6,998.80
Saugeen Shores	\$ 110,843.43	\$ 120,127.00	\$ 9,283.57
Southgate	\$ 35,817.85	\$ 26,924.37	\$ (8,893.48)
West Grey	\$ 78,131.17	\$ 94,131.83	\$ 16,000.66
Sub-total	\$ 650,000.00	\$ 682,500.00	\$ 32,500.00
User fees - Individuals	\$ 230,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	
User fees - Group Excursions	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 21,000.00	
Donations	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	
Other	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,500.00	
<b>NET LOCAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 900,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 960,000.00</b>	
<b>EXPENSES - net of HST</b>			
Audit - not an eligible MTO expense	\$ 19,000.00	\$ 19,000.00	
Advertising & Website	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	
Bad debts & Collection	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 4,000.00	
Bank charges	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	
Credit/Debit Card charges	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	
Interest	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	
Insurance - liability & property	\$ 8,000.00	\$ 10,000.00	
Legal	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 2,000.00	
Membership fees	\$ 2,500.00	\$ 2,500.00	
Driver Training, Apparel, Misc	\$ 5,000.00	\$ 5,000.00	
MTO Liason	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 7,500.00	
Office Supplies & Postage	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 13,000.00	
Computer System	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 32,000.00	
Office Rent	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	
Telephones	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 26,000.00	
Travel, Meals, Parking, etc	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,000.00	
Vehicles			
Fuel - cost less federal rebate	\$ 125,000.00	\$ 150,000.00	
Insurance	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 110,000.00	
Licenses	\$ 6,000.00	\$ 6,000.00	
Maintenance	\$ 106,000.00	\$ 95,000.00	
Wages & Benefits			
Group Benefit Plan	\$ 55,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	
Drivers	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 613,000.00	
Office	\$ 210,000.00	\$ 230,000.00	
Statutory Benefits & EHT	\$ 90,000.00	\$ 80,000.00	
<b>NET EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,400,000.00</b>	<b>\$ 1,490,000.00</b>	
<b>NET OPERATING SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>-\$ 500,000.00</b>	<b>-\$ 530,000.00</b>	
Provincial Gas Tax Funding - operating	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 530,000.00	
<b>NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	

2021 Amortization of Capital Assets will be approximately \$200,000

**THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF CHATSWORTH**

**BY-LAW NUMBER 2021-91**

**BEING a By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Council Meeting of the Corporation of the Township of Chatsworth held on December 29, 2021**

**WHEREAS** Section 5(1) of the Municipal Act 2001, S.O. 2001, Chapter 25 as amended, grants powers of a Municipal Corporation to be exercised by its Council; and

**WHEREAS** Section 5(3) of the Municipal Act 2001, S.O. 2001, Chapter 25 as amended, provides that powers of every Council are to be exercised by By-law unless specifically authorized to do otherwise; and

**WHEREAS** it is deemed expedient that the proceedings of the Council Meeting held on December 29, 2021 are confirmed and adopted by By-law;

**NOW THEREFORE** the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Chatsworth enacts as follows:

1. That the actions of the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Chatsworth at its Council Meeting held on December 29, 2021 in respect to each motion and resolution passed, reports received and direction given by the Council at the said meeting is hereby adopted and confirmed.
2. The Mayor and the proper Officials of the Corporation are hereby authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to the said action of the Council.

**READ** a first and second time this 29<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2021.

**READ** a third time and finally passed this 29<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2021.

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Scott Mackey, Mayor

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Patty Sinnamon, CAO Clerk