

SAUGEEN MOBILITY

and REGIONAL TRANSIT

GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, April 22, 2022, 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
Councillor Dave Cuyler, Municipality of Kincardine
Councillor Doug Bell, Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
Councillor Jim Frew, Township of Southgate
Councillor Dean Leifso, Municipality of Brockton
Mayor Scott Mackey, Township of Chatsworth
Councillor Ed McGugan, Township of Huron-Kinloss

Board Members Absent: Vice Deputy Mayor Mike Myatt, Town of Saugeen Shores, Board Past President

Others Present: 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 #2022-027

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Beth Hamilton

That the agenda for April 22, 2022 be accepted as circulated.

Carried

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting – April 8, 2022

Motion #2022-028

Moved by Dave Cuyler; Seconded by Beth Hamilton

That the minutes of the April 8, 2022 Special Board Meeting be amended to replace the two paragraphs in item 9 B with more general wording as proposed by Beth Hamilton.

Carried

5. Business Arising from the Minutes

A. 2021 Audited Financial Statements

i. Review of Final Statements

Motion #2022-029

Moved by Ed McGugan; Seconded by Doug Bell

That the Board of Directors of Saugeen Mobility and Regional Transit approve the Financial Statements for the Year Ended December 31, 2021 as presented by BDO Canada LLP.

Carried

ii. Revised Management Letter

It was noted that the Management Letter is included on pages 2 – 3 of the Auditor's Report.

iii. 2023 Bus Purchase

The President advised that he had consulted Chris Walker, Director of Corporate Services/Treasurer, Town of Hanover, who provided advice on the source of the funds to purchase the bus. No change is required to the funding.

B. Policy Sharing

Ed McGugan spoke to the CAO of Huron Kinloss who agreed to share their policies. He noted that as time goes on, there will likely be less and less need for SMART to access municipal policies as it develops its own policies.

C. Memorial Donations

i. Member Municipalities' Policies

Board members reported on their respective municipal policies.

Motion #2022-030

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That SMART adopts a policy of making a memorial donation of up to \$100 on the death of an active staff member and up to \$50 on the death of an immediate family member of an active staff member.

Carried

The President will ensure that a donation is made in memory of an employee who recently passed away.

ii. Tree Planting & Plaque

The President advised that SMART employees will look after this matter.

D. Replacement Van

The President advised that the van recently damaged in an accident has to be replaced or the funds returned to the provincial and federal governments. Subsequent to the meeting, Ms. Walker of the Town of Hanover confirmed that SMART will need to purchase a replacement vehicle before year end to avoid having to pay back the ICIP (Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program) funding.

E. Scheduler/Dispatcher Recruitment

It was agreed that filling the vacant dispatcher position should be deferred until a new Manager is in place. This will allow the Manager and the new Scheduler/Dispatcher to attend training on the NOVUS system at the same time, which will reduce costs, as up to six staff can be trained for one fee.

In response to a question from Ed McGugan, the President advised that the interim management team of Board members, and the staff are coping with the current situation, and that the best approach is to continue this arrangement.

F. Bruce County Update

There was no update on this item.

G. Media Relations Policy

H. Board and Employee Meetings Policy

I. Open Board Meetings Policy

The President noted that these items require input from the new Manager and it was agreed to defer implementation of these policies until a new Manager is in place.

6. New Business

A. COVID Policy Review

The President informed the Board that he had consulted Ward & Uptigrove for guidance on the policy and that the best available information varies depending on the public health unit and the industry. Ward & Uptigrove advised that there are some compliance issues regarding SMART's current screening.

Scott Mackey said that the policy is in need of review and in congregate care settings, employees have to do a rapid antigen test three times per week, as it is the only way to tell if the person should be coming into the workplace. Dave Cuyler agreed with Scott Mackey, saying that getting vaccinated and wearing a mask are personal choices, but the policy does need to be reviewed.

The President asked if Board members are in agreement with dropping the requirement for the rapid antigen test and completing the screening form as of April 27. Beth Hamilton explained that the HR consultant's recommendation is to follow guidelines for transit which require masks for drivers in vehicles, rather than following guidelines for long term care.

It was agreed that testing and completing the form will not be required as of April 27, 2022. Staff will be so advised and encouraged to stay home if they are sick, continue to physically distance, and continue masking, and cleaning/sanitizing protocols. It was also agreed that the web site will be updated to be consistent with the practice and to provide more general information.

Dean Leifso noted that government requirements are minimum standards and that employers can set their own requirements. He added that a person can get COVID if they are vaccinated and SMART could ask a person who has been sick with COVID to provide a negative test before returning to work. He said that security protocols should be in place around testing. Also, he noted that the law is still developing on liability and employers have to take reasonable steps, but the question is what is reasonable. He suggested maintaining masking in vehicles even if the provincial guidelines do not require it, and noted that a ride sharing service has decided to keep masking, but others have done away with it. He suggested that SMART consult with the places where clients are picked up, adding that a mask is required in hospitals, but questioned if it should be required of a driver in a vehicle carrying one passenger. Scott Mackey suggested that responsible and competent drivers won't want to transport anyone if they are sick and that the rapid antigen tests should be made available to drivers, but without the requirement to send in the result. This ensures that SMART is fulfilling its obligation to its clientele but eliminating the privacy concerns resulting from having to submit test results. The President clarified that the requirement to submit test results was being eliminated, not the testing itself. Employees are responsible to ensure a safe environment and making tests available to them is one way to do this. It was noted that tests are available free of charge from drug stores. The province originally planned to stop providing them free as of April 21, although that deadline was extended. Beth Hamilton explained that SMART had been buying tests, but drivers had to pay a fee for them, and that work was being done with the HR consultant to develop a message to staff. Dean Leifso suggested that the message should include the need to provide test results if requested or required and the need to keep test results in the event someone gets COVID. Scott Mackey said that the current policy penalizes people who did not get vaccinated, adding that vaccinations did not stop the spread of COVID but rather reduced hospitalizations. He supports taking the policy back to the HR professionals and updating it as soon as possible.

B. Mileage Reimbursement Outside of Board Meetings

The President noted that a policy is required to cover reimbursement for mileage by Board members travelling outside of Board meetings. The policy needs to address who should approve mileage

claims and it was suggested that a policy of one of the municipal partners be adopted. The Board requested that Catherine McKay develop a policy based on that of other municipalities.

C. Covering Letter for 2021 Annual Report to Municipalities

The covering letter and report will be put on hold until a new manager has been hired. The President noted that the final audited financial statements will be sent to the municipalities once they are received from the auditor. This item will be deferred to a future meeting.

D. GTR Request

The President informed that Board that he and Beth Hamilton had met with Charles Fitzsimmons Acting Manager of Community Transportation, Grey County which operates the GTR. GTR provides transit along fixed routes and clients call in to set up a pick up time. GTR does not have accessible vehicles and although there is not a lot of demand for accessible vehicles, they are looking for a partner service to provide accessible rides. Mr. Fitzsimmons estimated that there might be four calls a month. Beth Hamilton noted that GTR's hours of service exceed those of SMART and some of their service area falls outside of SMART's service area. It was agreed, however, that an arrangement between the two services might be mutually beneficial. A trial partnership for a year was suggested, providing that SMART was paid for all hours and time, and that staff be consulted to ensure that this is feasible.

The President noted that a complaint under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act could be filed regarding a service that is not complaint with this legislation. Discussion ensued about the practicalities of providing rides along a fixed transit route and the fragmented transit system that currently exists in Grey Bruce. It was suggested that this may be an opportunity to reduce duplication of service, eventually move towards a single transit system, and work together with the GTR to make things better in the end. Beth Hamilton described the situation as an opportunity to collaborate on a small scale and go from there. She said that the GTR will pay SMART for rides, and the GTR client will pay the \$5 GTR fee. She suggested leaving it to Grey County staff to draft a memorandum of understanding that can then come back to the Board.

Discussion covered various implications of such a partnership. Beth Hamilton noted that GTR is a fixed route system which does not work for most SMART clients and cannot replace the SMART system. She added that the new Manager of Home and Community Support Services reached out to SMART asking how it can help. Several Board members suggested that the best end result would ultimately be the amalgamation of various transit services to create a single service with accessible buses.

Motion #2022-031

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That the President and Vice President work with Grey County Transit Route (GTR) to develop an MOU for SMART service for GTR clients for a trial period of one year and that the draft MOU be on a future Board agenda for approval.

Carried

7. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

8. Reports and Recommendations

There were no reports and recommendations.

9. Committee Reports and New Business

A. Manager Recruitment Committee

Ed McGugan reported that he and Past President Mike Myatt, as the Recruitment Committee, worked with Ward & Uptigrove on steps in the recruitment. The Committee would like the position to be filled as soon as possible, but there are processes to be followed which take time.

B. Not-For-Profit Requirements

The President noted that he had been in touch with the law firm of Loucks & Loucks and one of their staff will attend an upcoming Board meeting to advise on the new requirements regarding not-for-profit corporations.

10. Closed Session

Motion #2022-032

Moved by Beth Hamilton; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That the Board of Directors of SMART move into Closed Session at 2:43 p.m. to discuss personal matters about an identifiable individual.

The Board of Directors of SMART reconvened in open session at 3:13 p.m. and the President confirmed that the Board had gone in closed session and discussed personal matters about an identifiable individual and that no other matters were discussed.

Motion #2022-033

Moved by Ed McGugan; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That the Board of Directors of SMART confirm direction as provided in the closed session.

Carried

Motion #2022-034

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That the Board of Directors of SMART authorize the payment of on-call pay equal to one hour's pay for each 12 hour period an employee is on call (there is a maximum of three (3) hours' pay per week) plus a minimum of two (2) hours' pay at time and a half for each time the employee is called out and has to report to the office or other required site. On-call and call out time is to be documented, and the amounts paid out reviewed monthly by the President and Vice-President.

Carried

The President requested that Board members keep Friday, May 27, 2022 at 1:30 p.m. open for the next Board meeting.

Motion

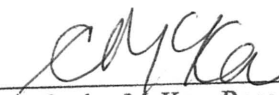
Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That the Board of Directors of SMART adjourn at 3:17 p.m.

Carried



Warren Dickert, President



Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary