

SAUGEEN MOBILITY

and REGIONAL TRANSIT

GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, July 10, 2026, 10:00AM

Boardroom, 603 Bruce Rd 19, Walkerton, ON & via Zoom

Board Members Present: Kym Hutcheon, Deputy Mayor, Brockton, Chair
Warren Dickert, Deputy Mayor, Hanover
Mark Goetz, Mayor, South Bruce
Doug Townsend, Councillor, West Grey
John Divinski, Councillor, Saugeen Shores (via Zoom)
Scott Mackey, Mayor, Chatsworth
Joel Loughead, Councillor, Grey Highlands
Ed McGugan, Councillor, Huron-Kinloss, past Chair
Jennifer Shaw, Deputy Mayor, Arran-Elderslie, Vice Chair (via Zoom)

Absent Members: Monica Singh-Soares, Councillor, Southgate
Mike Hinchberger, Deputy Mayor, Kincardine

Others Present: Stephen Labelle, General Manager

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00AM.

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

None declared.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion Moved by: Ed McGugan; Seconded by: Scott Mackey

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – June 4, 2026

Motion Moved by: Doug Townsend; Seconded by: Joel Loughead

That the minutes from June 4, 2026 be approved as presented.

Carried

5. Delegation - none

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

A. Transportation services for persons over 60

Motion

The General Manager said that additional legal research had identified potential concerns regarding SMART's charitable status if transportation services were expanded to non-disabled persons over 60.

Previous legal advice indicated this service could qualify as relieving hardship but further research indicated

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the Canada Revenue Agency could determine that the service falls outside SMART's charitable mandate and this could potentially result in the loss of charitable status and financial penalties.

Participation within a Municipal Services Board may address these concerns by positioning the service as a municipal transportation program rather than a charitable activity. Further legal clarification would be required.

Motion Moved by: Mark Goetz; Seconded by: Scott Mackey

That Saugeen Mobility defer a decision on providing this service until the full plan of the Bruce, Dufferin, Grey and Wellington Regional Transit Study project has been presented and analyzed.

Carried

B. Tripspark Custom Distance Report Motion

The General Manager reviewed the custom distance reporting project and explained that the current report requires manual manipulation due to inconsistencies within TripSpark's own reports. Current client invoicing relies on driver-completed paper vouchers and odometer readings because TripSpark data contains inaccuracies with missing and incorrect trip distances. The long-term goal is to automate reporting and eventually use TripSpark data for invoicing. Software improvements are required before this can be achieved. The Board encouraged the General Manager to continue negotiations before committing to spending money to modify the current report.

Motion Moved by: Ed McGugan; Seconded by: Jennifer Shaw

That the General Manager continue to work with TripSpark to improve the accuracy and usefulness of Novus data for reporting and operational decision-making.

Carried

C. ReadyCheck Motion

The General Manager advised that further investigation is required before making a recommendation. Although TripSpark initially indicated that comparable functionality was unavailable, further discussion suggested existing features within the software may satisfy many of SMART's vehicle inspection requirements. Additional review is pending to determine if ReadyCheck is still necessary or whether TripSpark can provide the required functionality without the spending a high amount of money to modify the current Tripspark system.

Motion Moved by: Ed McGugan; Seconded by Mark Goetz

Recommendation is to defer to the next Board meeting.

Carried

7. Correspondence – none

8. Reports and Recommendations

A. Report on May 2026 operations

The General Manager reported that ridership declined approximately 18% compared to May 2025.

The decline was attributed in part to the ongoing Community Living labour disruption, which reduced regular client trips. Inflation and increasing transportation costs may also have contributed to lower demand.

Motion Moved by: Warren Dickert ; Seconded by: John Divinski

That the report on May 2026 operations be accepted as presented.

Carried

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9. Closed Session – none**10. New Business****A. Vehicle Repair Motion**

The General Manager reported that Vehicle 211 requires an engine replacement after extensive winter idling caused engine failure. The issue is known to affect this particular engine model. To reduce the likelihood of future failures, drivers will be instructed to minimize vehicle idling during winter months by waiting inside facilities when possible. The estimate presented represents a worst-case repair cost. Replacing the engine was considered the most economical option when compared to purchasing a replacement vehicle.

Motion Moved by: Ed McGugan; Seconded by: Mark Goetz

That the General Manager spend up to \$16,500 to repair the 2021 accessible 9-passenger vehicle number 211.

Carried

B. SMART Annual Letter Motion

Members discussed whether the annual letter should be delayed until budget information was available. It was agreed that maintaining regular communication with municipal partners remains important and supported sending the annual letter as planned. It was suggested that updated photographs of SMART's fleet be included with the correspondence to show recent vehicle purchases.

Motion Moved by: Ed McGugan; Seconded by: Joel Lougheed

That the General Manager send the Annual Letter to the Municipalities with photos of our buses as amended.

Carried

C. SMART Get-Together Motion

The General Manager proposed holding the annual employee appreciation event in late September. Members encouraged exploring sponsorships or donated prizes from local businesses and organizations that work with SMART. The Board also discussed possible alternate venues that may better accommodate employees and their families. Suggested locations included the splash pads located in Chesley, Hanover and Walkerton. The General Manager agreed to investigate options and report back at the next meeting. Members also discussed rotating the event among municipalities served by SMART in future years. The Board agreed that Sunday, September 27, 2026, at 1:30 p.m. was the preferred date and time.

Motion Moved by: John Divinski; Seconded by: Warren Dickert

That the General Manager organize the Get-Together for September 27, 2026 at 1:30PM at a location to be determined.

Carried

D. Saugeen First Nations Motion

The General Manager advised that SMART recently received a request for transportation from a Saugeen First Nation resident living near the SMART service boundary. Since Saugeen First Nation is not currently a participating member, SMART was unable to provide service. The Board discussed re-establishing communication with Saugeen First Nation to determine whether there is new interest in joining the partnership. Members noted that letters of support from community members had been valuable in demonstrating the need for SMART services within existing member municipalities and suggested similar community input could be beneficial.

Motion Moved by: Scott Mackey; Seconded by: Warren Dickert

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That the General Manager contact Saugeen First Nations to assess current interest in joining the SMART partnership.

Carried

E. Legal Counsel

Board members discussed the increasing complexity of legal matters. Members expressed confidence in the expertise of Aird & Berlis for municipal governance and regional transit matters while recognizing that existing legal counsel with Loucks & Loucks could continue to be used for routine legal matters. The Board reached consensus that the General Manager will utilize legal counsel based on the expertise required for each matter. No formal motion was required.

11. Adjournment & Upcoming Meeting Date – Friday, September 11, 2026, 10AM

Motion Moved by: Joel Loughheed; Seconded by: John Divinski

That the Board meeting be adjourned as of 11:17AM.

Carried

Signed by:



10/4/2026

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Kym Hutcheon, Chair

Signed by:



10/6/2026

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Cassandra Cesco, Recording Secretary