

SAUGEEN MOBILITY

and REGIONAL TRANSIT

GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, March 19, 2026, 12:00PM
Boardroom, 603 Bruce Rd 19, Walkerton, ON & via Zoom

Board Members Present: Kym Hutcheon, Deputy Mayor, Brockton, Chair
Jennifer Shaw, Deputy Mayor, Arran-Elderslie, Vice Chair
Ed McGugan, Councillor, Huron-Kinloss, Past Chair
Scott Mackey, Mayor, Chatsworth
Warren Dickert, Deputy Mayor, Hanover
Doug Townsend, Councillor, West Grey
John Divinski, Councillor, Saugeen Shores
Mike Hinchberger, Councillor, Kincardine (via Zoom)
Monica Singh-Soares, Councillor, Southgate (via Zoom)
Joel Loughead, Councillor, Grey Highlands

Others Present: Stephen Labelle, General Manager

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:01PM. The Board confirmed quorum.

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

None declared.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion

Motion Moved by: Ed McGugan; Seconded by: Joel Loughead
That the agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – February 13, 2026

Motion

Motion Moved by: Scott Mackey; Seconded by: John Divinski
That the minutes from February 13, 2026 be approved as presented.

Carried

5. Delegation – Dennis Carr, Dillon Consulting, on the BDGW Transit Study

Dennis Carr of Dillon Consulting presented preliminary opportunities and emerging governance concepts for the BDGW Transit Study. The presentation emphasized that the study remains in the information-gathering and feedback stage, with governance options to be brought forward in April and recommendations expected in May. Board members discussed the importance of protecting SMART's existing mandate, retaining SMART as a separate entity, preserving specialized transit for current users, and ensuring that any future regional model include phased implementation and clear off-ramps.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

A. Updated Partnership Agreement

Motion

The Board reviewed correspondence confirming that South Bruce had signed the SMART Partnership agreement. It was noted that the signed version can now be circulated to the other participating municipalities for execution.

Motion Moved by: John Divinski; Seconded by: Doug Townsend

That the partnership agreement be circulated to the participating SMART municipalities for signature.

Carried

B. **Aird & Berlis legal firm** – deferred until more information is gathered

C. **Correspondence – letter from South Bruce municipality (SMART Partnership)**

It was confirmed that South Bruce agreed to become part of the SMART Partnership.

7. **New Business**

A. **BDGW Transit Study**

Motion

Following the delegation, the Board continued its discussion on the BDGW Transit Study and agreed that SMART should begin preparing its own conditions and negotiating positions in the event a future regional transit system proceeds. Board members stressed the need to define the terms under which SMART would participate and to communicate those conditions clearly as the study advances.

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

That a subcommittee be formed to develop proposed terms and conditions for SMART’s participation in any future regional transit arrangement.

Carried

The Board identified Kym Hutcheon, John Divinski, Mike Hinchberger, and the General Manager as the initial members of the subcommittee.

Motion Moved by: John Divinski; Seconded by: Ed McGugan

That, having heard the BDGW Transit Study update, the Board authorize the General Manager to continue work on the plan to be presented in May.

Carried

B. **Proposed SMART Business Computer Procurement**

Motion

The Board reviewed the condition of SMART’s office technology, including aging laptops and a six-year-old server. The discussion noted the operational risk of continuing with outdated equipment, recent server issues, and the possibility of improving backup and virtualization arrangements. The Board supported replacing laptops now while deferring any immediate server replacement decision.

Motion Moved by: Scott Mackey; Seconded by: John Divinski

That the General Manager procure four business computers for \$9000 to update the SMART office Information Technology.

Carried

C. **Proposed yearly wage adjustment**

Motion

The Board reviewed the proposed 2026 staff wage adjustment and discussed the municipal comparators used in calculating the increase. It was noted that the increase is already built into the 2026 budget.

Motion Moved by: Doug Townsend; Seconded by: Scott Mackey

That SMART staff wages be increased by 2.1% effective January 1, 2026.

Carried

8. **Reports & Recommendations**

A. **Report on February 2026 operations**

Motion

The Board reviewed the February 2026 operational report. Discussion included the continued decline in overall rides, client concerns about the cost of longer-distance trips, the comparison between SMART fares and other transportation providers, and the number of active and newly registered clients. The General Manager agreed to bring back additional comparative information on selected trip costs.

Motion Moved by: Jennifer Shaw; Seconded by: Joel Loughead

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

Carried

9. **Closed Session**

Motion

Motion Moved by: Ed McGugan; Seconded by: Monica Singh-Soares

That the Board move into Closed Session to discuss the ongoing investigation respecting the Board by the Ombudsman of Ontario appointed under the Ombudsman Act, and to discuss client-solicitor privileges.

Carried

The Board entered Closed Session at 3:00PM.

The Board returned to Open Session at 3:14PM.

Motion Moved by: Ed McGugan; Seconded by: Warren Dickert

Based on the advice of our solicitor, the SMART Board will continue to operate as a not-for-profit corporation, as per the Ontario Not-Profit Corporations Act.

Carried

10. **Adjournment & Upcoming Meeting Date – April 10, 2026, 10:00AM**

Motion

Motion Moved by: Monica Singh-Soares; Seconded by: John Divinski

That the Board meeting be adjourned as of 3:19PM.

Carried

Signed by:

867687BC6570420...
6/23/2026
Kym Hutcheon, Chair

Signed by:

A619F2DFE17F488...
6/23/2026
Stephen Labelle, Recording Secretary