

# **SAUGEEN MOBILITY**

## **and REGIONAL TRANSIT**

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### **GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

Friday, November 15, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

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

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

**Others Present:** Stephan Labelle, SMART Manager

**1. Call to Order**

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

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

None declared.

**3. Approval of the Agenda**

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

That the agenda be accepted as presented.

**Carried**

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting – October 18, 2024**

A question was raised regarding previous municipal contribution reductions in 2021, which have now been restored to or exceeded their original levels. The Chair answered that in some cases, these amounts have been exceeded while other municipalities have not restored their contributions to the 2021 level yet.

**Motion** Moved by Cheryl Grace; Seconded by Jennifer Shaw

That the minutes from October 18, 2024 be accepted as circulated.

**Carried**

**5. Delegation – none**

**6. Business Arising from the Minutes**

**A. Notifications Software**

The Manager explained that a new cost has been added to the contract: \$0.02 per text and \$0.03 per voicemail. Since not every ride will necessitate a text or voicemail, the annual expense is estimated to remain under \$1,800 plus taxes.

**Motion** Moved by Cheryl Grace; Seconded by Kim Hutcheon

That the Manager is approved for an installation cost of \$11,245 plus taxes, a yearly license fee of \$5655 plus taxes and a user fee expense of up to \$1800 plus taxes.

**Carried**

**B. Legal Opinion**

The Manager reported meeting with Loucks & Loucks to address two key matters. First, the Board, after reviewing a second legal opinion, decided to continue adhering to the Not-for-Profit Act rather than the Municipal Act. Second, they discussed Loucks & Loucks' letter to Saugeen Mobility dated October 28,

2024. While the letter recommended municipalities draft business cases, this is no longer necessary in light of the recent decision. The remaining actions include adding provisions to allow family and friends to ride on Saugeen Mobility vehicles for a fee, seeking approval from the Public Guardian and Trustee for vehicle use following the endorsement of the Articles of Amendment, and drafting a new Partnership Agreement to include Grey Highlands.

**Motion** Moved by Mike Hinchberger; Seconded by Warren Dickert

That the Manager send the modified letter to the Ombudsman as discussed.

**Carried**

**C. Deadhead**

The Manager presented a proposed zone system using the Grey and Bruce County map. The discussion centered on strategies to reduce deadhead mileage and the potential for hiring drivers based on designated zones. The Manager committed to revisiting the proposal, gathering additional data, and providing detailed cost analyses to support the Board in evaluating various options. Additionally, the Manager will explore a route optimization software solution. Scott Mackey noted that reducing deadhead could help extend the vehicle replacement schedule by decreasing the overall kilometers driven by SMART vehicles.

**Motion:** Moved by Cheryl Grace; Seconded by Doug Townsend

That the Manager develop alternative approaches for the deadhead.

**Carried**

**D. Vehicle purchase due to possible funds**

Using the spreadsheet outlining purchase and refund amounts, the Manager explained that government reimbursement for vehicle procurement funds would occur within three months, enabling subsequent purchases to proceed once the refunds are received. The discussion then shifted to the procurement of 9-passenger vehicles, with the Manager noting that a vote on this vehicle type had already taken place during the previous Board meeting. The Manager also addressed the procurement of minivans, highlighting the advantages of the Toyota Sienna hybrids from Creative Carriage, including superior fuel efficiency, reliability, and ride quality, despite their higher cost compared to the other two minivan options presented. Joel Loughead suggested that smaller, non-accessible sedans or minivans could be a cost-effective alternative for walk-on clients, offering lower fuel consumption and purchase costs compared to accessible vehicles. Following this discussion, the Board considered the possibility of purchasing two non-accessible minivans instead of a single accessible minivan to better accommodate walk-on clients.

**Motion:** Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Kym Hutcheon

That the Manager purchase seven accessible hybrid minivans from Creative Carriage and two non-accessible minivans.

**Carried**

**7. Correspondence**

Letter from Loucks & Loucks dated October 28, 2024

Letter from Grey County on transportation dated November 7, 2024

**Motion:** Moved by Warren; Seconded by Jennifer Shaw

That the Manager send a response to Grey County specifying Saugeen Mobility's agreement in participating in the Grey County transportation study.

**Carried**

**8. New Business**

**A. GPS Tracking & Telematics**

The Manager mentioned that although they are available for between \$15,000 and \$35,000 per year, GPS & Telematics devices were offered by a new company at a cost of \$7,000 per year. Warren Dickert said that Saugeen Mobility already has a vehicle tracking capability with its current software system, but

the Manager responded by pointing out that the system is not 100% accurate or reliable. He will investigate this issue.

**Motion** Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Mike Hinchberger  
That this report be received for information.

**Carried**

**B. Letter to Kincardine**

The Chair acknowledged that the current letter is nearly identical to last year's version, with updates made only to reflect new vehicle prices. This consistency was attributed to the exceptional work of the late Doug Kennedy. Mike Hinchberger also recognized Doug Kennedy's contributions and suggested that the four-year option be removed. He recommended presenting two options instead: one featuring an accessible minivan and the other an accessible 9-passenger van.

**Motion** Moved by Mike Hinchberger; Seconded by Cheryl Grace

That the Manager modify the letter as discussed and send it to the Kincardine Council.

**Carried**

**C. Chatsworth pilot project**

The Manager presented the preliminary results of the pilot project, revealing that of the 18 active clients from Chatsworth, 50% (9 clients) discontinued using Saugeen Mobility services. While seven new clients began using the service, this resulted in a net loss of two clients. Scott Mackey acknowledged the results to date. The Chair requested that the Manager conduct a detailed analysis of the sales and ride numbers and present additional insights at the next meeting.

**Motion** Moved by Kym Hutcheon; Seconded by Warren Dickert

That the Chatsworth pilot project be extended to December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025.

**Carried**

**D. ROMA conference**

The Chair noted that last year's ROMA conference delegation request was initiated by Huron-Kinloss. This year, Warren Dickert volunteered Hanover to prepare the request. Monica Sing Soares expressed her support for the delegation initiative and mentioned that she is likely to attend the conference. The Manager will draft the content for the request and forward it to the Hanover clerk for submission.

**Motion** Moved by Monica Sing Soares; Seconded by Warren Dickert

That the Manager send a draft of a delegation text to the Board for review and then to the Hanover clerk.

**Carried**

**9. Budget**

Discussions regarding budget options followed, with the hope that future government funding for vehicle purchases will support the acquisition of a replacement 30-passenger bus.

**Motion** Moved by Kym Hutcheon; Seconded by Mike Hinchberger

That the municipal contributions be increased by 9.5% and that the basic ride rate be increase by \$4.

**Carried**

**10. Reports and Recommendations**

**A. Report on October 2024 operations**

The Chair explained that the Board members had received the report outlining the figures for October.

**Motion** Moved by Mike Hinchberger; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That the Report on October 2024 Operations be received for information.

**Carried**

**11. Adjournment & Upcoming Meeting Dates**

**Upcoming Meeting Dates**

Friday, December 11, 2024, 10:00 a.m.

**Motion** Moved by Warren Dickert; Seconded by Cheryl Grace

That the Board of Directors of SMART adjourn at 1:06 p.m.

**Carried**



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Ed McGugan, Chair



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Stephan Labelle, Recording Secretary