

SAUGEEN MOBILITY

and REGIONAL TRANSIT

GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, April 10, 2026, 10:00AM

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 (via Zoom)
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 (via Zoom)
Mike Hinchberger, Councillor, Kincardine (via Zoom)
Monica Singh-Soares, Councillor, Southgate (via Zoom)

Board Members Absent: Joel Loughhead, Councillor, Grey Highlands
Mark Goetz, Mayor, South Bruce

Others Present: Stephen Labelle, General Manager
Kevin Tremble, Partner, MNP

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The Chair called the meeting to order at 10:00AM. 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: Scott Mackey; Seconded by: Doug Townsend

That the agenda be approved as presented.

Carried

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting – March 19, 2026

Motion

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

That the minutes from March 19, 2026 be approved as presented.

Carried

5. Delegation – Kevin Tremble, MNP, 2025 Audit of Saugeen Mobility

Kevin Tremble presented the draft audited financial statements and the audit findings. He advised that MNP was prepared to issue a clean audit opinion and that the financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, SMART's financial position in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Kevin reviewed the statement of financial position, Operations, Change in Net Debt and Cash Flows. It was noted that the significant increase in tangible capital assets reflected the purchase of new 2025 vehicles funded through the federal capital grant. The Board asked questions about the organization's financial stability following the receipt and expenditure of the vehicle grant. The auditor advised that he did not see red flags from an audit perspective, noting that the grant funds came in and were spent on the intended capital purchases, while other expenses remained generally stable. The Board also discussed the timing of the transfer of gas tax responsibility, the funds held by Hanover, and the need for follow-up information on how that transition will occur.

Mr. Tremble then reviewed the audit findings letter and the management letter. Items discussed included bank reconciliations, removal of terminated employees from benefit listings, oversight of credit card usage, and prepaid expenses. The General Manager advised that the administrative team and a representative from MNP discussed the observations from this report prior to this meeting and would action all recommendations identified (some were already actioned). The Board also discussed the cost of paying insurance monthly compared with paying annually.

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

That the Board approve the draft audited financial statements as presented and authorize MNP to issue the final audited financial statements.

Carried

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

A. TripSpark custom kilometre report

Motion Moved by: Mike Hinchberger; Seconded by: Doug Townsend

That the TripSpark custom kilometre report matter be deferred to the next meeting to allow the General Manager to review whether useful information can be prepared internally and whether any support may be available through the BDGW Transit Study process.

Carried

B. BDGW Transit Study – Governance Options

The General Manager advised that the governance options information expected from the consultant had not yet been received. The Board was advised that a summary of the information would be provided once it is available, but that the Board could not make a decision at this meeting.

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

That the BDGW Transit Study governance options item be deferred until the information is available.

Carried

7. Correspondence - none

8. Closed Session

Motion

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

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.

Carried

The Board entered Closed Session at 11:17AM.

The Board returned to Open Session at 11:31AM.

The Board agreed that the resolution discussed in Closed Session would be brought forward into Open Session and included in the public minutes.

Motion Moved by: Warren Dickert; Seconded by: Doug Townsend

That the Board approve the resolution discussed in Closed Session and bring it forward into Open Session.

“Whereas the Office of the Ontario Ombudsman completed its investigation into the meeting held on May 26, 2023, which it found was not open to the public as required by the Municipal Act, 2001; And whereas the Ombudsman Final Report dated September 21, 2024 was received and reviewed by the Board;

And whereas the report found that SMART is a joint local board, and accordingly made the following two recommendations:

Recommendation 1: All members of the Board of Directors for Saugeen Mobility and Regional Transit should be vigilant in adhering to their individual and collective obligation to ensure that SMART complies with its responsibilities under the Municipal Act, 2001.

Recommendation 2: The Board of Directors for Saugeen Mobility and Regional Transit should adopt a procedural by-law governing the calling, place, and proceedings of meetings in accordance with its obligations under the Municipal Act, 2001.

And whereas the SMART Board of Directors has determined, following discussion with legal counsel, that SMART is not a joint local board;

Therefore, be it resolved that the SMART Board of Directors confirms that SMART will continue to govern itself under the Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, 2010, on the basis that SMART is not a joint local board. In keeping with its commitment to openness and transparency, the Board will continue to post meeting dates, agendas, and minutes on the SMART website.”

Carried

9. **New Business**

A. **Summer Board meeting dates**

The Board discussed the importance of continuing to meet during the summer because of the BDGW Transit Study, the proposal before the Board, and the need for timely decisions before the municipal election period. The Board also discussed the June meeting dates, including the planned June 4 presentation and the need to confirm availability for June 18.

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

That the SMART Board hold meetings on July 10 and August 14, 2026, to ensure timely decision-making with respect to the BDGW Transit Study and other Board business.

Carried

B. **Driver Trainer Wage**

The Board discussed whether the driver trainer should receive a wage premium while training new drivers, like the premium paid for operating the 30-passenger bus. Board members supported recognizing the added training responsibility while keeping the premium consistent with the existing bus premium.

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

That the driver trainer be paid a wage premium of \$1.00 per hour while training a new driver, effective January 1, 2026.

Carried

C. **Proposed three-month ride-along trial for non-disabled persons over 60**

The Board discussed a possible three-month trial allowing non-disabled individuals aged 60 and over to use SMART where space is available. The discussion considered whether this could help recover costs on existing trips, reduce the effect of deadhead travel, and test concepts being discussed through the broader transit study.

Board members discussed eligibility, whether the service should be limited to existing routes or available vehicle time, the effect on dispatch workload, whether the trial would apply to the Kincardine enhanced service pilot, potential municipal subsidy implications, the effect on municipal contribution calculations, and the possible effect on local taxi providers. The Board agreed that the concept required more information before a decision is made.

The General Manager was asked to bring the matter back with further information on staff implications, municipal implications, possible financial impacts, and implementation considerations. The Board agreed to defer the matter to the next meeting as amended.

10. **Reports & Recommendations**

A. Q1 Budget Update

Motion

The Board reviewed the Q1 budget update. The General Manager advised user fees were below the forecast compared to the prior year, likely reflecting the recent decrease in ride volumes. School transportation revenue was above forecast. Expense items discussed included insurance payments, lower fuel costs (due to hybrid vehicles) and maintenance costs related to additional vehicles and winter tires.

Motion

Moved by: Warren Dickert; Seconded by: Mike Hinchberger
That the Q1 budget update be received for information.

Carried


11. **Adjournment & Upcoming Meeting Date – June 4, 2026**


Motion

The May 21, 2026 meeting was cancelled. The next meeting was set for June 4, 2026, with the time to be confirmed, likely at noon depending on the consultant's schedule.

Motion Moved by: Jennifer Shaw; Seconded by: Doug Townsend
That the meeting be adjourned as of 12:09PM.

Carried

Signed by:

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Kym Hutcheon, Chair

Signed by:

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Stephen Labelle, Recording Secretary