

SAUGEEN MOBILITY

and REGIONAL TRANSIT

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GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Friday, November 22, 2019, 12:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: Councillor Doug Bell, Municipality of Arran-Elderslie
Councillor Dean Leifso, Councillor, Municipality of Brockton
Mayor Scott Mackey, Township of Chatsworth
Councillor Warren Dickert, Town of Hanover
Councillor Ed McGugan, Township of Huron-Kinloss
Councillor Dave Cuyler, Municipality of Kincardine
Vice-Deputy Mayor Mike Myatt, Town of Saugeen Shores
Mayor John Woodbury, Township of Southgate
Councillor Beth Hamilton, Municipality of West Grey

Others Present: Roger Cook, Manager
Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

President John Woodbury called the meeting to order at 12:12 pm.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest or Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Dean Leifso declared a conflict of interest with regard to the Manager's Report 2019-32, Rental Agreement, as he is in a position to participate in the negotiating of the agreement with the Municipality of Brockton.

1. Minutes of the October 25, 2019 General Board Meeting

- With respect to Resolution #2019-56, Mike Myatt clarified that he had raised questions about what changed to result in staff increasing from 1 day per week to the equivalent of 10 days per week.
- It was noted that a motion to appoint a recording secretary had been passed by email and that the Board needs to endorse this motion because it was made electronically. This item will be added to the agenda under Business Arising from the Minutes.

Resolution #2019-59

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Doug Bell

That the Board approve and adopt the minutes of the October 25, 2019 General Board Meeting as circulated.

Carried

2. Business Arising from the Minutes

Electronic Meeting Attendance and Voting

- Southgate has, for the last year and a half, allowed Council members to attend meetings and vote electronically by cell phone, but such attendance does not count towards quorum. Since voting by email is not conducted in public, such votes are ratified at the next open meeting. Electronic voting is not allowed for in-camera sessions, as others could possibly be listening in.
- Roger Cook said that he would have to explore whether SMART's phone system is capable of allowing electronic participation and voting.

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Resolution #2019-60

Moved by Warren Dickert; Seconded by Dean Leifso

That the Board allow voting by email from members' official listed email addresses only and meeting attendance by way of electronic means (similar to Skype or conference call) for any item that is considered an open agenda item. Attendance by electronic means does not count towards quorum. Any in-camera items are not eligible for this method of attendance or voting.

Carried

Recording Secretary

Resolution #2019-61

Moved by Dave Cuyler; Seconded by Dean Leifso

That the Board create the position of Recording Secretary to take minutes at Board meetings.

Carried

Resolution #2019-62

Moved by Warren Dickert; Seconded by Mike Myatt

That the Board appoint Catherine McKay as recording secretary for SMART until December 31, 2020, at which time the need for this role will be re-evaluated. In recognition of this service, the Board will give an honorarium in the amount of \$100.00 for each regularly scheduled meeting where this service is required. In addition, any request for the Recording Secretary to attend additional meetings must be approved by the President or Vice-President prior to the meeting taking place. The honorarium for each additional meeting will be the same (\$100.00) as any regularly scheduled meeting. All travel costs to and from the meetings will be at the sole cost of the Recording Secretary as long as such meeting is held in a member community. Office supplies approved by the Board will be at the cost of the Board. The honorarium will be paid quarterly. The Recording Secretary shall report in each meeting minutes the number of meetings she has attended since January 1 of the year in which it occurs.

Carried

3. Follow-up on Previous Reports and Recommendations

None.

4. Correspondence

The Board received for information Resolution No. 25-468-2019 of the Municipality of Arran-Elderslie.

5. Manager's Reports and Recommendations

2019-26 October 2019 Operational

The Manager presented the report along with an additional report, October Operational Report (RC2019-26+) and the Gas Tax Activity Report. He noted that it was more of the same but better and made the following points in response to Board Members' questions:

- On the Balance Sheet, the Line of Credit is not shown as a separate item, but included in line item 11115 Bank – Meridian Credit Union as if it were a large overdraft.
- The Manager noted that ridership is up and expenses are down, which is good news and which he partly attributes to dispatch/scheduling efficiency and other efficiencies.
- Private nursing homes book rides, and the question was asked if SMART is in effect subsidizing their operations out of gas tax revenue and municipal funding. The Manager explained that if SMART does not do these rides, the residents do not get out. Such rides are paid for out of resident fees, which is residents' money, not corporate funds. It was pointed out that private homes pay property taxes.
- If a nursing home books an individual ride for a resident, it is the individual person who is invoiced. If three or more individuals are on a ride, it is considered to be a group excursion and the invoice is sent to

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the home. Invoices can be sent to different parties, including the individual person taking the ride, ODSP, Home and Community Support, depending on the circumstances.

Resolution #2019-63

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Warren Dickert

That the October 2019 Operational Report RAC2019-26 and RAC2019-26+ be approved.

Carried

2019-27 - Minutes

- It was explained that Cheryl Brine's notes were included the Strategic Plan Package. It was noted that minutes are public and so should include full information.
- Scott Mackey was not at the June 11 or July 18 meetings.

Resolution #2019-64

Moved by Ed McGugan; Seconded by Doug Bell

That the minutes of the Strategic Planning meetings held on June 11 and July 18 be amended to show that Scott Mackey was not present and that the Board of Directors of SMART approve and adopt the minutes as amended and the minutes of the Scope of Service meeting held on October 7.

Carried

2019-28 - Benchmarking and Modeling

The Manager presented the report and made the following points in response to questions from Board members:

- The peer group includes all municipalities with populations from 50,000 to 150,000. The peer group is created by the Ontario Public Transit Association and the Canadian Urban Transit Association.
- Cost/passenger is less with bigger vehicles and the number of vehicles is a decision of an individual service.
- SMART is at the high end of the Adult Cash Fare and the higher the municipal funding, the lower the user fee. SMART's municipalities pay a disproportionately low amount. Other services have large rural areas also, and so comparisons should be made to other similar areas. Most in the peer group are in urban areas. It is important to make "apples to apples" comparisons with other similar services providing door to door mobility transportation.
- Some services receive funds from LHINs, as does Home and Community Support, but the Southwest LHIN has no money for SMART.
- Beth Hamilton provided the Manager with information about the operating hours of two of the listed services and it was noted that it is not clear whether all members of the peer group provide Sunday service.
- Vehicle cost is an audited expense and therefore includes amortization.
- The Manager stated that SMART is underfunded compared to the peer group average.
- The level of detail provided in this report is new and the Board complimented the Manager on compiling it. The Board discussed whether there is any merit to some members working on a deeper analysis and/or modelling which would increase the support network for the Manager and provide more information for future decision-making on the service level. It was agreed to create a Committee for this purpose and all Board members are to receive email notification of the Committee's meetings so they can attend if they wish.

Resolution #2019-65

Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by Scott Mackey

That the Board of Directors of SMART create a Modelling and Benchmarking Committee, with the members to include Ed McGugan, Beth Hamilton, Warren Dickert, and Roger Cook.

Carried

ORIGINAL

Resolution #2019-66

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Warren Dickert

That the Benchmarking and Modelling Report RAC2019-28 be approved.

Carried

2019-29 - Service Options

- The Manager presented the report and clarified that every service receives gas tax revenue based on the Ministry of Finance's numbers which creates a "share" which is applied to gas tax revenue. It is a variable, not a fixed, number, so if rides increase, the share may not increase. A "ride" can be very short (e.g. Brucelea Haven to the Walkerton Hospital) or very long (e.g. to London), and if a service wanted to cut costs, it would do more short rides to get more gas tax funding.
- As a registered charity, one option for SMART is to increase donations.
- There is no minimum service level required to get gas tax funding. A service could do less and get more gas tax revenue.
- A question was put forward as to whether the Community Transportation Project in Grey County would affect gas tax funding, but it is not known if the proposed service will be set up as a public transit system. It was suggested that the two counties should work together to create a transit system that they control. Grey County approached SMART about running the Community Transportation Project. The Manager noted that this would be a significant change and that the paperwork alone would take a year.
- Smaller municipalities need options and perhaps the Committee can generate options for consideration. It is preferable for the smaller municipalities to be part of SMART rather than have no service.
- Different pockets of money are doing similar things with the same taxpayer paying for multiple systems. For example, the LHIN pays Home and Community Services to provide rides and perhaps SMART could reduce weekend service if Home and Community Services could provide weekend rides. Perhaps there should be a move towards one specialized transit service and if it was at the County level, the LHIN could redeploy resources to support it, but this would be difficult due to the number of partners.
- It was agreed to defer this report in light of the creation of the Benchmarking and Modelling Committee and it was noted that the report will provide an excellent basis for the Committee's work.

Resolution #2019-67

Moved by Warren Dickert; Seconded by Dean Leifso

That the Service Options Report RAC2019-29 be referred to the Benchmarking and Modelling Committee.

Carried

2019-30 - 2020-24 Municipal Contributions

- The Manager presented the report and discussion covered the following points.
- Concern was expressed about the \$140,000 gas tax reserve shortfall for last year and \$83,000 for this year. The Manager noted that gas tax revenue next year should be about the same and SMART will come close to a balanced budget in 2020.
- Given the creation of the Benchmarking and Modelling Committee it was suggested that the Board today only approve year 1 (i.e. 2020) of 5.
- The disparity in municipal contributions was discussed and the fact that taxi services are now getting into the business.
- The per capita calculation is very rough and depends on each municipality's unique assessment mix (residential, industrial, etc.) and what filters down to an individual ratepayer is not clear. Due to the way the numbers are presented, they can cause strained relationships between communities. In the case of Hanover, it has a lot of rides but they have the lowest average distance. It was noted that Hanover, like other communities, benefits because people are being brought into town who then frequent town facilities and businesses. It was suggested that the per household measure is inaccurate and that a good measure needs to be found.

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- It may be possible to defer the 2020 budget as some municipalities will not approve their budget until May 2020.

Resolution #2019-68

Moved by Mike Myatt; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That the 2020-2024 Municipal Contributions Report RAC2019-30 be received for information.

Carried

2019-31 - 2020 Proposed Operational Report

- The Manager presented the report and discussion covered the following points.
- Ideally, the municipalities should budget no more than 50% of expected gas tax funding for operations with 30% budgeted for capital and 20% for contingencies.
- It is difficult to support a justification for an increase in staff without a justification being provided in advance.
- The Manager explained that the Human Resources Committee decides wage increases and he had received no response to an email request to have a meeting of the committee prior to the Board meeting.
- SMART receives an HST rebate. HST is reflected in expenses and all expenses are net of HST.
- Member fees cover memberships in the Ontario Public Transit Association and the Canadian Urban Transit Association.
- A question was asked about the need for advertising, especially with the 211 service and the vehicles themselves being the best form of advertising. It was suggested that the member municipalities should put information about SMART on their web sites.
- SMART's web site costs very little to maintain and ads are placed once a month in local papers.
- The cost of training new drivers is covered in the driver wages budget line. There are conferences such as the annual Transportation Expo, seminars and regional meetings that staff can attend.
- It was noted that the Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 1.7% for Ontario and area wage increases were in the range of 1.75 – 2.5%. The Human Resources Committee will meet to consider these issues.

Resolution #2019-69

Moved by Dave Cuyler; Seconded by Dean Leifso

That the 2020 Proposed Operational Budget RAC2019-31 be deferred to the January 2020 meeting.

Carried

2019-32 - 2019 Rental Agreement

- Dean Leifso was absent from this discussion, having declared a conflict of interest.
- The Manager presented the agreement and discussion covered the following points.
- The increase in the rented space might be seen as very expensive storage and board meeting space. The Manager explained that this space is used every day by staff and if it was not available, that would restrict operations. Also, SMART needs proper storage for its records which will go into the vault.
- If SMART did not rent the space in question, it was not clear if Brockton could find another client for it, or use it.
- The parking area is used for SMART vehicles, and if the organization were to move, any new facility would have to have sufficient parking space. The current rent includes heat, hot water, and snow removal and if there had been small increases over the years, they would have had little impact compared to a relatively large increase now.

Resolution #2019-70

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Ed McGugan

That the new Office Rental Agreement Report RAC2019-32 be approved and signed by the President and the Manager.

Carried

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2019-33 - Capital Budget and Vehicle Replacement

- The Manager presented the report and discussion covered the following points.
- The capital budget information needs to be included in the overall budget in order to get capital funding from the municipalities. There was discussion about the allocation of ICIP funding to capital versus operations with the Manager noting that the cleanest way to do it is to allocate the entire \$140,000 to operations versus \$90,000 to operating and \$50,000 to capital. MTO money normally goes to capital and operating, but recently has gone almost exclusively to operations.

Resolution #2019-71

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Dave Cuyler

That the Capital Budget and vehicle Replacement Report RAC2019-33 be received for information.

Carried

6. Closed Session to Discuss Identifiable Individuals

Resolution #2019-72

Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by Warren Dickert

That the Board of Directors of SMART move into Closed Session at 3:01 p.m. to discuss issues regarding identifiable individuals.

Carried

The Recording Secretary remained in attendance for the closed session.

Resolution #2019-73

Moved by Dave Cuyler; Seconded by Mike Myatt

That the Board of Directors of SMART reconvene in Open Session at 3:25 p.m..

Carried

Resolution #2019-74

Moved by Scott Mackey; Seconded by Doug Bell

That the Board of Directors of SMART receive the information from the Closed Session.

Carried

7. Directors' Recommendations and Directives

There were none.

8. Other Business

The Friday, January 24, 2020 meeting was changed to Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

9. Adjournment

Moved by Scott Mackey

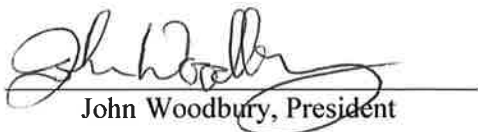
That the Board of Directors of SMART adjourn at 3:28 p.m..

Carried

Recording Secretary Meeting Attendance

The Recording Secretary attended the following meetings:

- Friday, November 22, 2019


John Woodbury, President


Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

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