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GENERAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, January 14, 2020, 2:00 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

Board Members Absent: None

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

President John Woodbury called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest or Declaration of Conflict of Interest
None declared.

John Woodbury notified the Board that he is stepping down as President given the letter from the Township of Southgate advising of its intention to withdraw from the SMART partnership.

Election of President
The President called for nominations for the position of President. Scott Mackey nominated Mike Myatt. The nomination was seconded by Ed McGugan. There were no further nominations and Dean Leifso moved that nominations be closed, seconded by Dave Cuyler. The motion was carried and Mike Myatt was declared President and assumed the Chair.

Election of Vice-President
The President called for nominations for the position of Vice-President. Dean Leifso nominated Warren Dickert. The nomination was seconded by Scott Mackey. There were no further nominations and John Woodbury moved that nominations be closed, seconded by Doug Bell. The motion was carried and Warren Dickert was declared Vice-President.

It was agreed that these positions are for a term of one year.

1. **Minutes of the November 22, 2019 General Board Meeting**
   Board members expressed satisfaction with the minutes produced by the Recording Secretary.

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Resolution #2020-001
Moved by Warren Dickert; Seconded by Dave Cuyler
That the question of when the Board receives minutes of closed sessions be added to the agenda for January 14, 2020, and that "Closed Meeting Minutes" be included as a standing agenda item at the closed session of Board meetings.
Carried

Resolution #2020-002
Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by John Woodbury
That the Board approve and adopt the minutes of the November 22, 2019 General Board Meeting as circulated.
Carried

2. **Business Arising from the Minutes**
   Electronic Meeting Attendance and Voting
   Roger Cook will follow up on this item.

3. **Follow-up on Previous Reports and Recommendations**
   None.

4. **Correspondence**
   Letter from the Township of Southgate
   - Southgate's notice to withdraw from the SMART Partnership arose out of concerns about SMART's financial situation, and with changes at the County level, Southgate Council decided to keep its options open by providing notice to take effect in one year. Southgate could exit SMART in December 2020, but Council hopes to see cost savings which would allow it to continue to participate in providing the service.
   - The Board discussed the Grey County transportation initiative which will run buses across Highway 26 and down Highway 10, with one going to Markdale, and one to Dundalk. A Highway 4 route may be implemented, but is under discussion only at this time. The system is expected to be launched in a couple of months. A $1.5 million grant was provided to Grey County along with $500,000 to Southgate, as well as additional funding, for a system providing service on fixed routes. It will not be door-to-door, but will make regular stops using accessible vehicles leased from First Student with parking areas being available near the stops. The system would be similar to RIDE WELL in Wellington County. The point was made that private transportation systems have come and gone and the future of private systems may be tenuous.
   - Ideally, the system would be best as a Grey-Bruce initiative, but it was felt that Bruce County is not likely to do a transit system. However, staff from Grey and Bruce Counties have had discussions and it may be within the realm of the possible. It was noted that everything is connected to transportation and especially so for marginalized people and those in rural areas. The focus now is on a fixed route system, but the issue is to get it going and build on it, and how SMART can partner with these services should be explored.
   - The Board would like to have Stephanie Stewart, Community Transportation Manager from Grey County attend its March or April meeting to provide more information on the system.

   Memorandum from Catherine McKay
   The Board received the memorandum for information and agreed with the proposed process for producing minutes. There was discussion about the level of detail that should be provided in minutes when they are distributed to Municipal Council, but it was agreed that it is a positive thing for Councils to see the discussion that occurs at the Board.

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5. Reports and Recommendations

RAC2019-34 November 2019 Operational
The Manager presented the report and the question was raised as to whether the procedure at Board meetings should be changed so that it is not necessary to read out the full report at meeting. Rather, it was suggested that Board members read the report in advance, including the financial information, and come prepared with questions.

The following points were made in response to Board members' questions:

- The report states that the reserve account is depleted and it was noted that the operating deficit carries forward until the gas tax money comes in which is expected in March, although in some years, it has come later.
- A significant amount is paid in interest on the overdraft and the manager will check on the rate.
- The Board's five-year plan projects that the deficit will be paid off and the reserve account built back up.
- The actual vs. budget computer expenses are high because the budget was set too low.
- Driver wages and benefits expenses were budgeted too high, while office wages were budgeted too low.
- Statutory benefits are below budget because of changes to WSIB and other benefits.
- November of 2018 was very busy, so by comparison, 2019 is down.
- Remote and rural clients pay more and travel farther. There is no direct relationship between the number of rides and contribution.
- In the document titled "2019 Operational Budget vs Actual as at November 30, 2019", it was decided to remove the word "unaudited" from the column headings, as it is misleading. The books are audited annually, but each month is not audited separately.
- In addition to renaming the columns, it was decided to rearrange the columns so they are in the following order from left to right: 2018 at Nov 30, 2019 at Nov 30, Budget 2019, Actual vs. Budget, and 2019 vs 2018.

Resolution #2020-003
Moved by Dean Leifso; Seconded by Warren Dickert
That the October 2019 Operational Report RAC2019-34 and be approved.
Carried

Level of Service Committee Recommendations (Benchmarking and Modelling)
The President commended the committee for doing a very thorough job and providing excellent information. Beth Hamilton presented the report which analyzed SMART's operations compared to seven similar services in similar areas. During the presentation, the following points were highlighted about SMART's service.

- It is the only service operating every day of the week at any time of day, and covers the largest area with the second largest population and the lowest population density.
- Funding per ride is high at 6th out of 8, passenger revenue/fares is above average at 5th out of 8, level of other revenue is the highest at 6th out of 6, provincial funding is low at 2nd out of 6, municipal funding is high at 6th out of 8, and other contributions are low at 2nd of 5.
- Due to the large area and low population density, operating expenses and capital costs per ride are high.
- On p. 2, in the 2nd line, it should say that SMART has the 2nd largest population, and on p. 7, 2nd paragraph, "mean" should be changed to "median".

The following comments were made during the discussion of the report.

- What sets SMART apart is that it operates in two counties anywhere anytime. Some other services do in fact provide service for dialysis patients outside of regular operating hours because a person cannot drive after dialysis treatment.

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- Provincial funding includes funds from LHINs, but SMART gets no funds from the LHIN. Home and Community Support organizations which provide similar transportation services do not exist everywhere, and so the issues of funding and comparisons can be muddy.
- Other services solicit and receive donations, which could be an area of improvement for SMART.
- Compared to its peers, SMART's municipal funding is higher, and its provincial funding is lower.
- In 2017, Lanark's service had two vans and 2 minivans.
- Hours of operation should indicate that transportation for dialysis patients would be provided on Sunday at Christmas as well as on statutory holidays. It was also noted that CT scans in area hospitals take place 24 hours/day, so there should be exceptions to the operating hours to accommodate this It was suggested that SMART shouldn't have to provide the service if the LHIN funded organization can do it, since it is the LHIN requiring the patient to go to the hospital outside of SMART's operating hours.
- Accessibility Advisory Committees in the area should be consulted about the proposed changes, and Mike Myatt said that he would find out from the Committee in his area about the implications of no Sunday service.
- The Board should consider if mileage should be increasing, and examine the 15 km limit to determine if it would have unanticipated negative impacts, such as not permitting people from Dundalk to go to Markdale for shopping.
- Board members want to know what the savings would be if the recommendations were adopted. Roger Cook noted that if rides go down, gas tax will go down, but he could not say what the effect on municipal contributions might be.
- SMART has to find savings because if municipalities do not see a reduction in their municipal contributions, they may not be willing to continue in the SMART partnership.
- Roger is to prepare a chart for the February 21 meeting showing savings from the recommendations, the impacts in 2020, including impacts on human resources, and implications for mileage.
- The Board decided that this report is worthy of a special meeting, to be held on Friday, February 21, 2020, at 1:00 p.m.

Resolution #2020-004
Moved by John Woodbury; Seconded by Doug Bell
That the Level of Service (Benchmarking and Modelling) fact finding report dated January 14, 2020 be received.
Carried

Resolution #2020-005
Moved by John Woodbury; Seconded by Scott Mackey
That SMART hold a special meeting on Friday, February 21, 2020 at 1:00 p.m., to discuss the recommendations as outlined in the in the Level of Service (Benchmarking and Modelling) report dated January 14, 2020.
Carried

RAC2020-01 Level of Service Review Comments
This report will be deferred to the February 21, 2020 meeting, along with the Level of Service Committee's recommendations.

RAC2020-02 2020 Proposed Operational Budget
Resolution #2020-006
Moved by Beth Hamilton; Seconded by Dave Cuyler
That the 2020 Operational Budget be deferred to the February 21, 2020 Board meeting and that the Manager also present the capital budget at that time.
Carried

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RAC2020-03 Client Advisory Committee
The Board discussed the issue of establishing a Client Advisory Committee, and raised the following issues:

- It was agreed that feedback from clients is important, with municipalities also being clients.
- The Board would have to determine the role, if any, of local Accessibility Advisory Committees, as well as whether to establish terms of reference for a Client Advisory Committee.
- The Board would also need to send the draft report of the Level of Service Committee to Grey and Bruce County Accessibility Advisory Committees and receive their feedback before establishing a new Client Advisory Committee.
- If a committee were established, it would meet at noon on the day of a regular Board meeting to minimize costs of Directors attending an additional meeting.

Resolution #2020-007
Moved by Beth Hamilton; Seconded by Warren Dickert
That the creation of a Client Advisory Committee be approved in principle and considered as part of the Level of Service Recommendations at the February 21, 2020 meeting.
Withdrawn

Resolution #2020-008
Moved by Scott Mackey; seconded by John Woodbury
That Report RAC2020-03 be received for information.
Carried

6. **Directors Recommendations and Directives**
There were none.

7. **Other Business**
HR Committee Minutes
The Committee Chair presented the minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting of December 16, 2019, along with an organization chart of SMART. The Board discussed the documents, with the following points being made:

- Discussion of the Committee's recommendation regarding the Christmas bonus will be deferred to the February 21, 2020 Board meeting.
- It is not necessary to show the President and Vice-President positions on the organization chart.

Resolution #2020-009
Moved by Scott Mackey; seconded by Warren Dickert
That the Board receive for information the draft minutes of the Human Resources Committee meeting of December 16, 2019.
Carried

Resolution #2020-010
Moved by Dean Leifso; seconded by Scott Mackey
That Board approve the Human Resources Committee's recommendation that all SMART employees be awarded a 1.7% wage increase effective January 19, 2020.
Carried

Resolution #2020-011
Moved by John Woodbury; seconded by Ed McGugan
That board approve the organization chart effective January 14, 2020, as presented by the Human Resources Committee.
Carried

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8. Closed Session

Resolution #2020-012
Moved by Dean Leifso; seconded by Warren Dickert
That the Board of SMART move into Closed Session at 4:30 p.m. to consider the Minutes from the Closed Session of November 22, 2019.
Carried

The recording Secretary and the Manager remained in attendance for the closed session.

Resolution #2020-013
Moved by Dave Cuyler; seconded by Doug Bell
That the Board of SMART reconvene in Open Session at 4:40 p.m..
Carried

It was agreed that the Board needs clarification as to when the minutes of a closed session should be presented for approval. It was agreed that Warren Dickert would consult with the Clerk of the Town of Hanover and report back to the Board on the matter.

9. Adjournment

Moved by Scott Mackey
That the Board of Directors of SMART adjourn at 4:42 p.m.

Recording Secretary Meeting Attendance
The Recording Secretary attended the following meetings:

- January 14, 2019

Mike Myatt, President

Catherine McKay, Recording Secretary

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