



1 **Green Mountain Transit Board of Commissioners**
2 **Meeting March 16, 2021 - 7:30 a.m.**
3 **101 Queen City Road, Burlington VT 05401**
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6 *The mission of GMT is to promote and operate safe, convenient,*
7 *accessible, innovative, and sustainable public transportation services in*
8 *northwest and central Vermont that reduce congestion and pollution,*
9 *encourage transit oriented development, and enhance the quality of life*
10 *for all.*
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13 **Attendees**

14 **Board of Commissioners**

15 Commissioner Waninger, Chair
16 Commissioner Davis, Vice-Chair
17 Commissioner Baker
18 Commissioner Bohne
19 Commissioner Brewer
20 Commissioner Buermann
21 Commissioner Derenthal
22 Commissioner Dimitruk
23 Commissioner Gallagher
24 Commissioner Kaynor
25 Commissioner Polyte
26 Commissioner Pouech
27 Commissioner Sharrow
28 Commissioner Spencer

29 **GMT Staff**

30 Jon Moore – General Manager
31 Chris Damiani – Transit Planner
32 Devin Mason – Transit Planner
33 Pam McDonald – Accounting Coordinator
34 Trish Redalieu – Director of Human Resources
35 Jamie Smith – Director of Planning and Marketing
36 Kimberly Wall – Grant Manager

37 **Members of the Public**

38 Ross MacDonald – VTrans
39 Spencer Smith
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41 **Open Meeting**

42 Commissioner Waninger opened the meeting at 7:30 AM.

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44 **Adjustment of the Agenda**

45 No adjustments

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47 **Public Comment**

- 48 • Would like to see some of VTrans bus funding used for cutaway buses, not just Gilligs
- 49 and other larger buses.
- 50 • Would like to see a robust PR campaign to regain ridership after vaccine rollout is more
- 51 advanced, reassuring passengers that the buses are safe to ride.

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53 **Consent Agenda (Action Item)**

- 54 • Commissioner Bohne requested correction to spelling of last name (misspelled as
- 55 “Bohn”) in February minutes.
- 56 • Commissioner Bohne motioned to approve consent agenda with aforementioned
- 57 correction.
- 58 • Commissioner Davis and Commissioner Pouech seconded.
- 59 • Passed without opposition, abstention, or further discussion.



VTrans Update

- Received \$6.3 million in American Recovery funding.
- Triennial management review is in session.
- VTrans is studying fare-free revenue scenarios.
- VTrans soon plans to launch a “Return to Ride” campaign to attract passengers to mass transit post-pandemic.
- **Commissioner Waninger:** Is the revenue study focused on the replacement sources for revenue? **Ross MacDonald:** this would be at least a component of the study.
- **Commissioner Davis:** Is there any interest in re-evaluating how fare-free subsidies are used (e.g. investing in increased frequency over elimination of fare)? **Ross MacDonald:** This is considered annually. But with the current state of travel (likely to extend after containment of the pandemic, as some may continue working from home), new commuter routes are less likely.
- **Commissioner Davis** expressed concern that, with GMT’s current provision of service, many who cannot use the service would still be subsidizing it. Is there a way that fare-free service could be targeted towards those who most need it? **Ross MacDonald:** What may be feasible is targeting service tiers for fare elimination. Perhaps local routes would go fare-free while LINK Express routes continue to charge a fare. Additionally, fare-free service may also assist in attracting pre-pandemic passengers, as well as new ones, after the pandemic is contained.
- **Commissioner Gallagher:** Fare-free status on LINK routes may be just as important as on local routes, if not more so, as many LINK passengers are choice riders who may see extra incentive to use the bus if it is free. It may be a good way to attract drivers to mass transit. **Ross MacDonald:** An additional advantage of fare-free service is that passengers do not need to worry about remembering the fares for specific routes, and eliminating the step of fare-payment is likely to accelerate boarding, thereby aiding with schedule adherence.
- **Commissioner Davis** concurred with Commissioner Gallagher but also indicated that, for many, the schedule and/or frequency are a barrier to entry, one on which cost has little to no bearing. Reiterated suggestion that fare-free service be targeted to individuals who need it the most, so as to strike a balance between service-expansion and fare-free service.



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123 **General Manager Report – Updates and Opportunity for Questions on the Report**

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- 125 • General Manager, Jon Moore, discussed various new and existing measures surrounding
126 safety during the pandemic.
 - 127 • Collective bargaining negotiations begin this week and will continue for three weeks.
 - 128 • GMT will receive roughly \$7.7 million in American Rescue funding.
 - 129 • **Commissioner Derenthal:** What are the restrictions for this funding? Would it be
130 restricted to operational expenses, or could it be used for capital expenses as well (such
131 as electric buses)? **Jon Moore:** The funding is first intended for operational costs,
132 especially reinstating any furloughed during the pandemic. If money remains after such
133 expenses, GMT may be able to use it for capital expenses.
 - 134 • **Commissioner Waninger** thanked Jon Moore for work on obtaining reimbursement from
135 Proterra, due to a programming issue resulting in surcharges from the Burlington Electric
136 Department.
 - 137 • **Jon Moore:** Proterra has identified a third-party vendor to program GMT's charges such
138 that a plugged-in bus will charge only during off-peak times, even if the bus is plugged in
139 during peak times. GMT is withholding 10 percent of the payment on this system until
140 fully satisfied that the contractual requirements have been met.
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Board Committee Reports

- Strategy – Commissioner Buermann
 - Committee discussed transit strategy plan review with consultant Stephen Falbel.
- Operations – Commissioner Sharrow.
 - Working on finalizing performance dashboard.
 - Discussed potential areas of concern with regards to the transportation of school students within GMT’s microtransit area.
- Finance – Commissioner Bohne
 - Was unable to attend last Finance Committee meeting. Commissioner Dimitruk provided updates.
 - Reviewed current budget and discussed changes to paid-time-off agreement.
- Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) – Commissioner Polyte
 - Hoping to have a consulting firm to introduce at the April board meeting.
 - **Commissioner Wanager:** Is the Committee waiting for the consultant to be hired before adding members to the advisory committee? **Commissioner Polyte:** No, Jamie Smith is currently working on advertising material to recruit members for the Advisory Committee.
- Retirement – Nick Foss
 - Committee did not meet in February. Nick Foss met with legacy retirement provider ICMARC and was informed that there are currently eight participants in the program, but that the overall liability is high..

FY21 Quarter Two Financials Presentation

- Nick Foss provided an update on quarter two finances.
- **Commissioner Bohne:** For buses that are parked pending engine overhauls, can those buses simply be disposed of without overhauls if new buses will soon arrive to take their place? **Jon Moore:** Yes. With service reductions and the upcoming arrival of new buses, GMT has no plans to overhaul these buses.

General Manager Authority during COVID-19 (possible action item)

- Jon Moore provided an update on where General Manager COVID-19 authority has been used in the past year.
- Commissioner Kaynor motioned to extend General Manager authority, pertaining to service suspensions and capacity limits, for the duration of Governor’s state of emergency.
- Commissioner Baker and Commissioner Polyte seconded.
- Motion passed without opposition, abstention, or further discussion.



203
204 **June 2021 Proposed Service Changes - Presentation & Discussion (p.1/2)**

- 205 • Jamie Smith and Chris Damiani provided an update on proposed service changes.
- 206 • **Commissioner Buermann:** Would this eliminate the stop by CCV? **Commissioner**
- 207 **Brewer:** CCV moved to Congress Street and Main Street, currently served by the
- 208 Downtown Shuttle.
- 209 • **Commissioner Dimitruk:** Concerned that lower-income neighborhoods may see a
- 210 reduction in service while wealthier neighborhoods see an increase. Concerned about
- 211 equity issues. **Jon Moore:** The Downtown Shuttle will still serve this location.
- 212 **Commissioner Dimitruk:** Acknowledged, but this is still a degradation of service.
- 213 • **Commissioner Brewer:** Concerned that, for employees working at the industrial park,
- 214 using the LINK requires a longer walk.
- 215 • **Commissioner Kaynor:** For proposed Red Line service to WhiteCap Industrial Park
- 216 (Williston), beware that construction near the intersection of Industrial Avenue and
- 217 Williston Road will begin soon and last for a year, potentially complicating buses'
- 218 negotiating the inbound right turn onto Industrial Avenue.
- 219 • **Commissioner Waninger:** As part of the NextGen Transit Plan, GMT sought to eliminate
- 220 instances in which routes deviated from their main alignment; why, then, are we
- 221 proposing the addition of such a deviation in this case? Also, relating to St. Albans, why
- 222 increase walking distance for some passengers while decreasing it for others? **Jamie**
- 223 **Smith:** The trip to WhiteCap already happens; this is essentially a schedule shift. For St.
- 224 Albans, evidence suggests that passengers are not using the LINK to reach the areas
- 225 that would lose LINK service. **Jon Moore:** Ridership demand is also likely sufficient, and
- 226 there is no sidewalk. **Commissioner Kaynor:** For Williston, this area is not considered
- 227 high-income; it is low-income for Williston.
- 228 • **Commissioner Kaynor:** Concerned that GMT did not remove numbers from the urban
- 229 locals and believes that this may have been the cause for some of the confusion,
- 230 especially since the route numbers do not match the numbering of the roadways on
- 231 which they operate (e.g. GMT Route 1 operates on U.S. Route 2). Would like to see
- 232 color-coding remain while de-emphasizing interlining. **Jamie Smith:** The color-coded
- 233 routes are often more difficult for people to understand than numbers, if they have
- 234 reading issues or their first language is not English. Additionally, some are accustomed to
- 235 the previous numbered system.
- 236 • **Commissioner Derenthal:** Outreach process after changes have been decided? **Jamie**
- 237 **Smith:** Surveys, whose results will be presented to the board.
- 238 • **Commissioner Derenthal:** Do we have subscriber lists? **Jamie Smith:** Yes.
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242
243 **June 2021 Proposed Service Changes - Presentation & Discussion (p.2/2)**

- 244 • **Commissioner Waninger:** What is the outreach process for people whose first language
245 is not English? **Jamie Smith:** GMT will likely be working with a translation service.
- 246 • **Commissioner Pouech:** Would lines still be color-coded on the service maps and
247 schedules? **Jamie Smith:** Yes.
- 248 • **Commissioner Kaynor:** Will previously interlined routes keep their color-coding on the
249 map (e.g. Routes 1 and 7 being red)? **Jamie Smith:** No.
- 250 • **Commissioner Sharrow:** Curious to know what transfer of Middlebury LINK to
251 TVT/ACTR would mean for the MCI buses currently used on this route. **Jon Moore:**
252 Some coaches may go to ACTR, but they may not be interested. Regardless, GMT's fleet
253 size would be reduced.
- 254 • **Commissioner Buermann:** Would like to see an update on what NextGen efficiencies
255 GMT implemented, which have been reverted, and what has been learned. **Jamie Smith:**
256 NextGen changes exist in a previous board retreat document; Planning can indicate, in
257 that document, which changes have been reversed.

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260 **FY22 Zero-fare Policy Discussion**

- 261 • Jon Moore provided an update regarding zero-fare policy.
- 262 • **Commissioner Kaynor** expressed support for fare-free service over expanding service,
263 due to the cost of maintaining the fareboxes and the inconvenience to passengers.
264 Compared GMT to a public service, like education, and argued that it should be fare-free.
265 Also stated that stores should not provide free parking.
- 266 • **Commissioner Sharrow** indicated suspicion that fare likely is not the greatest barrier to
267 passengers using GMT's system. Not in favor of fare-free service until a good alternative
268 funding source is identified.
- 269 • **Commissioner Davis:** Opinion sits between that of Commissioners Sharrow and
270 Kaynor. Would like to see a balance of fare-free for those who need it, as well as
271 expanded service to attract new riders.
- 272 • **Commissioner Pouech** expressed support for fare-free service for increase ridership but
273 stated that GMT should also continue to look at the big picture, of which fare-free service
274 is one part.
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282 **Executive Session: 1 VSA 313(a) (1) (e), pending or probable civil litigation or**
283 **prosecution, to which the public body is or may be a party.**

284 *Is there a motion to find that premature public knowledge of a pending civil litigation to which*
285 *GMT is a party would place GMT at a substantial disadvantage?*

- 286 • Commissioner Baker motioned.
- 287 • Commissioner Spencer seconded.
- 288 • Motion passed without opposition, abstention, or further discussion.

289 *Is there a motion to enter executive session pursuant to 1 VSA 313(a) (1) (e) to discuss a*
290 *pending civil litigation?*

- 291 • Jon Moore, General Manager, was invited to executive session.
- 292 • Commissioner Baker motioned.
- 293 • Commissioner Sharrow Seconded.
- 294 • Motion passed without opposition, abstention, or further discussion. Executive session
295 began at 9:32 AM.
- 296 • Commissioner Baker motioned to exit executive session with no action taken.
- 297 • Commissioner Polyte seconded.
- 298 • Motion passed without opposition, abstention, or further discussion.

299 **General Commissioner Comments**

300 Tabled for schedule adherence.

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302 **Adjourn**

303 Commissioner Baker motioned to adjourn. Commissioner Davis seconded. Meeting adjourned
304 at 9:40 AM without opposition, abstention, or discussion. Next GMT Board of Commissioners
305 Meeting Date: April 20, 2021.