



1                                   **Operations Committee Meeting Minutes**  
2                                   **December 13, 2021, 2021 10:00 AM**  
3                                   **101 Queen City Road, Burlington VT 05401**

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5                                   *The mission of GMT is to promote and operate safe, convenient, accessible, innovative, and*  
6                                   *sustainable public transportation services in northwest and central Vermont that reduce congestion*  
7                                   *and pollution, encourage transit-oriented development, and enhance the quality of life for all.*

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10 **Present:**

11 Commissioner John Sharrow, Milton  
12 Commissioner Matt Cota, South Burlington  
13 Commissioner Bonnie Waninger, Washington County  
14 Commissioner Tasha Wallis, Lamoille County  
15 Commissioner Meg Polyte, Burlington  
16 Jon Moore, General Manager  
17 Jamie Smith, Director of Planning and Marketing  
18 Connie Englert, Director of Transportation  
19 Nate Bergeron, GMT Driver  
20 Nick Foss, Director of Finance  
21 Jen Harriger, NBC5  
22 Krystin Rae, WPTZ

23  
24 **Open Meeting**

25 Chair Sharrow opened the meeting at 10:00AM.

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27 **Adjustment of the Agenda**

28 None

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30 **Public Comment**

31 None

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33 **Approval of Committee Minutes**

34 Commissioner Cota made a motion to approve the November 2021 minutes,  
35 Commissioner Waninger seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

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37 **Monthly Operations and Maintenance Update**

38 Director Englert gave an update on the Operations and Maintenance department  
39 report, including staffing levels.

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41 GM Moore gave an update on the recruitment campaign noting all ads have been  
42 updated to reflect benefits from the new contracts.



44 **GMT Drug & Alcohol Testing Policy Update Proposal**

45 GM Moore gave a brief update. GMT has identified a handful of positions who don't  
46 meet safety sensitivity requirements and are not subject to random testing. The goal  
47 of the policy updates is to remove the unnecessary positions from the random  
48 testing pool so we are able to filter safety sensitive employees through the testing  
49 policy more efficiently.

50  
51 Commissioner Waninger made a motion that the Operations Committee recommend  
52 approval of the Drug and Alcohol policy updates to the full board, Commissioner  
53 Cota seconded. Commissioner Wallis abstained from voting. Remaining  
54 Commissioners were in favor and the motion carried.

55  
56 **Montpelier Transit Center Sub-Lease Agreement Update**

57 GM Moore gave an update on the pending MOU. Commissioner Waninger asked  
58 how do we help passengers understand that during off hours, while the building is  
59 open, that there are not transit services operating? GM Moore said that there are no  
60 transit services at that time Monday – Friday and staff would provide the group with  
61 general information to answer questions. Commissioner Sharrow asked if there are  
62 any inner-city services using that area after hours? GM Moore said not at that time.

63  
64 **Downtown Transit Center Safety and Security Discussion**

65 GM Moore gave an overview of the DTC challenges, including significant behavioral  
66 challenge noting that supervisors are on-site and trained to de-escalate situations.  
67 However, Supervisors are not law enforcement and at times GMT does have to  
68 contact the Burlington Police Department to intervene. The Burlington Police  
69 Department is not always available to assist, which adds pressure internally to GMT  
70 staff.

71  
72 GM Moore said that GMT was contacted by the Director of Safety and Security for  
73 the State of Vermont, which manages the building across the street from the DTC.  
74 The state is experiencing some similar behavior issues and contacted GMT to  
75 discuss sharing some resources to contract with the Sherriff's Department. GMT and  
76 the Burlington School District is also interested in providing some resources for  
77 contracted security services.

78  
79 Commissioner Cota asked what is the length of the contract and cost for the  
80 Sherriff's Department? GM Moore noted that there isn't currently a contract.  
81 Commissioner Cota asked what is the concern or danger with having drivers not  
82 enforce the mask mandate but rather de-escalate it? GM Moore noted that we will  
83 look into additional options to enforcement and what policy changes need to be  
84 made to keep our staff safe.

85



86 Commissioner Wallis asked about the contract with the state and noted that it is  
87 specific to state property, and what would the relationship be between the Sherriff's  
88 Department and the Burlington Police? GM Moore noted that there still needs to be  
89 a conversation with BGS regarding the contract. Additionally, GMT would need to  
90 discuss the contract with the Burlington Police Department.

91  
92 Commissioner Sharrow asked about the Church Street patrol? GM Moore was  
93 unaware of the options available to us from the Church Street patrol. Commissioner  
94 Sharrow expressed feeling that buses should be flooded with masks to help alleviate  
95 the conflict. GM Moore noted that GMT is exploring ways to provide more masks on-  
96 board the vehicles.

97  
98 Nate Bergeron noted that the issue is two pronged. One is having masks available,  
99 but the second is enforcement. There are several passengers who will remove their  
100 mask mid-run. What is the policy if someone removes their masks during the run?  
101 Commissioner Sharrow's feeling is that folks should be removed from the vehicle if  
102 they continue to remove their mask.

103  
104 Commissioner Polyte asked what the repercussions to having the driver site the  
105 mask mandate and potential fines but continue driving? GM Moore noted that the  
106 TSA goal is compliance but not enforcement. GM Moore also said that GMT needs  
107 to think through all the potential impacts to other riders and ridership.

108  
109 Commissioner Waninger asked when the mask mandate expires and are we  
110 expecting this to be extended again. Director Englert noted that this is dictated by  
111 aviation at this time, and we don't expect airlines to lift the mask restrictions anytime  
112 soon.

113  
114 Commissioner Waninger asked if law enforcement on the platform would cause  
115 distress for some of our drivers? GM Moore noted that we haven't surveyed  
116 internally, but would expect that more support is better than less but acknowledged  
117 that some staff might be uncomfortable. Commissioner Waninger asked if there is  
118 anything we can do internally to minimize the discomfort?

119  
120 Nate Bergeron noted that whatever is decided by the Board of Commissioners, there  
121 needs to be consistency. Every time there is an issue on the bus, others are  
122 watching and if we relax the mask mandate, it will likely cause others to stop  
123 masking. The drivers lose any authority in that case and eventually they will stop  
124 enforcing the policy because they will feel unsupported.

125  
126 Commissioners Sharrow and Polyte volunteered to be included in any and all  
127 meetings regarding the masking conflicts and future policy conversations.

128



129 **Future Items to be Presented Discussion**

130 Chair Sharrow asked about the performance dashboard. GM Moore noted that there  
131 are several items that could/should be added to the dashboard and staff would  
132 review and add new items as necessary.

133

134 Commissioner Waninger asked if the committee could see a presentation of the new  
135 PTO policy and asked to see if it is meeting the goals and what is the liability by  
136 department? Director Foss noted that information exists in this month's Finance  
137 Committee materials.

138

139 **Adjourn**

140 Commissioner Waninger made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Cota seconded.

141 All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 11:00AM.