



1 **Green Mountain Transit Board of Commissioners Meeting Minutes**
2 **January 17, 2023–7:30 a.m.**
3 **101 Queen City Road, Burlington VT 05401**

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

10
11 **Present:**

12 Commissioner Austin Davis, Winooski
13 Alternate Commissioner Tom Derenthal, Burlington
14 Alternate Commissioner Chapin Kaynor, Williston
15 Commissioner Paul Bohne, Essex
16 Commissioner Bob Buermann, Grand Isle County
17 Commissioner Christian Meyer, Washington County
18 Commissioner Amy Brewer, Williston
19 Commissioner Matt Cota, South Burlington
20 Commissioner Henry Bonges, Milton
21 Commissioner Chapin Spencer, Burlington
22 Commissioner Catherine Dimitruk, Franklin County
23 Jamie Smith, Director of Planning and Marketing
24 Jon Moore, Assistant General Manager
25 Clayton Clark, General Manager
26 Stephanie Reid, Director of Human Resources
27 Nick Foss, Director of Finance
28 Matt Kimball, Director Grants and Project Development
29 Tim Bradshaw, VTrans
30 Debbie Coppola, Controller
31 Chris Damiani, Senior Transit Planner
32 Erika Osorio, Transit Data Analyst
33 Ash LaBombard, Marketing Coordinator
34 Steve Falbel, Steadman Hill Consulting

35
36 **Open Meeting**

37 Chair Davis opened the meeting at 7:34AM.

38
39 **Adjustment of the Agenda**



40 None

41

42 **Public Comment**

43 None

44

45 **Consent Agenda (Action Item)**

46 Commissioner Derenthal made a motion to approve the consent agenda,
47 Commissioner Bohne seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

48

49 **General Manager Clayton Clark Introduction**

50 GM Clark gave a brief introduction and highlighted the warm welcome from
51 staff. GM Clark expressed excitement to be at GMT, noting that the problems
52 facing the agency are the exact type of problems he enjoys working on.

53

54 **VTrans Update**

55 Tim Bradshaw gave an update on the following:

- 56 • VTrans and GM met with local dialysis units to discuss service concerns
57 and capacity issues. Both agencies will continue to look for a solution
58 to address those concerns.
- 59 • The statewide route performance report is out, Tim requested time at
60 the next meeting to discuss service performance of GMT routes.
- 61 • VTrans has been working with GMT's finance department to streamline
62 the invoicing process and continued work on the midyear grant
63 amendment.
- 64 • Commissioner Derenthal asked about the new scheduling and
65 dispatch software and when GMT would have access? Tim reported
66 that VTrans is still working through a compliance matrix and is hoping
67 for a kick-off in the next week or two.

68

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

71 GM Clark noted that the plan was to return back to a written report next
72 month and updated the Board of Commissioners on the following:

73

74

- 75 • Staffing: GM Clark reported on urban staffing, specifically in the
76 Operations Department. Our current schedule requires 63 drivers, and
77 our current roster is 61. Due to other factors, including medical, time
78 off, and book offs, we have roughly 49 drivers available on any given
79 day. This results in 30% of the service being operated at overtime or
80 double time and is a tremendous drain on staff.



81
82
83
84
85
86
87
88
89
90
91
92
93
94
95
96
97
98
99
100
101
102
103
104
105
106
107
108
109
110
111
112
113
114
115
116
117
118
119
120

On top of being short in the driver pool, GMT recently lost two Operations Managers. We are actively recruiting for those positions. The bargaining unit in Franklin County recently voted to approve hiring full time, non-CDL drivers, to cover much of the non-emergency medical trips.

Despite being nimble on staffing seasonal operations, we have not been able to fulfill the peak service obligations for Stowe and Sugarbush service. Not only is this staffing situation stressful, but it causes our seasonal funding partners to be disappointed.

- Community Rides VT: GM Clark reported that GMT and Community Rides VT recently finalized a subrecipient agreement. Once an operations start date is determined, Community Rides VT will use vehicles they procure to provide rides through the Mobility for All program, in addition to providing non-emergency medical and E&D trips. They will utilize our call center and trip booking systems.
- The Medicaid contract was extended for 6 months, but was level-funded. This extension will give time to resolve funding issues with that program.
- Fare resumption: GM Clark mentioned the amount of press fare resumption has gotten over the last two weeks and said AGM Moore would be on Vermont Edition today to talk more about fare free transit.
- GM Clark talked about each of the three holiday lunches at GMT offices, and said they were a great opportunity to meet employees.

Board Committee Reports

- Strategy: Commissioner Buermann reported the committee did not meet this month.
- Ops: Commissioner Cota reported the committee did not meet this month.



- 121 • Leadership: Chair Davis reported the committee discussed items for
122 today's meeting and continued engagement between staff and the
123 board. Chair Davis reminded the Board Commissioners that a Google
124 form was included in the meeting email that will assist in creating Board
125 bios.
126 • Finance: Commissioner Bohne reported the committee met about
127 items in the Finance report and noted that despite the Medicaid
128 contract extension, GMT is still on track to lose money with that
129 program.
130

131 **Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Application (Action Item)**

132 Director Smith gave a brief update on the planned FY24 planning projects to
133 be included on the UPWP application and reviewed year-over-year projects.
134 Commissioner Buermann made a motion to submit the FY24 UPWP
135 application to include the projects discussed, Commissioner Spencer
136 seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.
137

138 **FY24 Operating Budget Adoption (Action Item)**

139 Staff presented an update of the budget meeting, including the increased
140 attendance. Director Foss said that there wasn't considerable comments
141 given on the presentation, but GMT did receive a number of comments on
142 fare free and service reductions/expansions.
143

144 Commissioner Spencer discussed the motion made at the Finance
145 Committee, and the need to move forward with a more sustainable funding
146 mix.
147

148 Commissioner Spencer asked if this budget sets us up in a way to move
149 forward with a more sustainable funding model? GM Clark said it gives us
150 ammunition to tell a story to Legislators and the state. The fact that we will
151 need cuts will demonstrate the need for more sustainable funding.
152 Commissioner Spencer noted support from the Board to help tell that story.
153

154 Commissioner Spencer made a motion to approve the FY24 budget with
155 following conditions: staff bring an updated ADA funding policy to the Board
156 prior to FY25 budget approval that will seek to minimize swings to member
157 communities, GMT Board and staff priority the efforts for state and regional
158 funding to strengthen the Authority's long-term funding, and GMT staff will
159 work to redouble rural community outreach for private public partnerships



160 were appropriate. Commissioner Derenthal second. All were in favor and the
161 motion carried.

162
163 Chair Davis said that a second motion for the service reductions were in
164 order.

165
166 Commissioner Spencer made a motion to recommend the service changes
167 outlined in the packet, necessary due to the budget just approved,
168 Commissioner Buermann seconded. GM Clark Clayton said that the process
169 to get back to fare collection is a heavy lift and the Board will continue to
170 receive updates on that process at future meetings. Chair Davis noted that
171 no one likes to see service cuts, however they are necessary at this time and
172 said the Board should use this as an opportunity to demonstrate the gravity of
173 the transit funding situation to policy makers. All were in favor and the motion
174 carried.

175 176 **Zero-Fare Assessment Presentation & Discussion**

177 Steve Falbel gave a presentation on the impact of zero fare statewide. The
178 presentation can be found online with the Board meeting documents

179
180 Commissioner Bonges asked for percentages to better understand the
181 impact and commented that the growth rate factors should consider things
182 like work from home impacts.

183
184 Chair Davis asked if no destination rides were considered, especially ones
185 that result in poor behavior? Steve noted that the perspective of the
186 presentation is statewide. Many areas don't experience the same level of
187 issues.

188
189 AGM Moore noted at the time this study was being conducted, GMT didn't
190 have capital figures on the fleet infrastructure needed to collect funds. We
191 now know that roughly half of the fleet has an obsolete fare box system and
192 the investment to replace them is high.

193
194 Director Foss noted that in FY13, GMT was seeing over \$2M in fare revenue,
195 and the budget was roughly \$5M lower than the budget for FY24. The FY24
196 budget is higher and projecting less fare revenue. This type of growth is not
197 sustainable.

198
199 Alternate Commissioner Kaynor noted the impacts to STIC factors if we
200 remain fare free or if GMT collects a fare, and noted that should be factored



201 into the presentation. Additionally, on-time performance is affected when
202 fare collection is in place.

203

204 Commissioner Bohne asked if there was data on how much fare revenue was
205 as a result of government agencies subsidizing fares? Director Smith noted
206 that we work with a number of agencies in the urban system to provide rides
207 to clients.

208

209 Chair Davis asked if the staff proposal was to bring back fares, why wasn't
210 capital funding identified in the capital budget. AGM Moore said that GMT
211 didn't anticipate needing to invest so heavily in infrastructure.

212

213 Tim Bradshaw asked if GMT anticipated asking for grant support in the state
214 grant award? AGM Moore said possibly sooner.

215

216 Commissioner Bonges asked how heavily GMT prioritized private-public
217 partnerships for FY23? AGM Moore said that GMT did work closely with
218 partners, and that work would continue.

219

220 Alternate Commissioner Derenthal mentioned lack of staff capacity to
221 leverage these partnerships and maintain these relationships.

222

223 Commissioner Brewer discussed a group of riders, mainly young people who
224 are not drivers, as well passengers who would grow into choice riders. GM
225 Clark shared an idea about a series of videos where the GM demonstrates
226 how to ride the bus. The goal is to have people think about GMT more
227 holistically rather than just a service to get to and from work.

228

229 **Organizational Assessment Request for Proposals (RFP) Discussion**

230 GM Clark made a proposal to the Board to delay the issuing of this RFP by a
231 week or two. As he acclimates to the agency, GM Clark is discovering items
232 that we may want to add to the RFP. For example, staff has not conducted a
233 staff engagement survey since 2018. It's important to have an assessment
234 about how staff feels about working for GMT and to not assume leadership
235 knows what people want. GM Clark also said that a plan to evaluate the
236 potential changes after they are made needs to be built into the study.

237

238 GM Clark asked if issuing the RFP in February would be acceptable. Chair
239 Davis asked the Board if they were okay with GM Clark making updates to
240 the draft and sharing it via email to keep the process going. The board can



241 review in February unless comments indicate that there should be action
242 sooner. The Board was in support of that path forward.

243
244 Commissioner Buermann asked about the agreement with VTrans, and
245 whether we would be meeting the timeline defined in that agreement. GM
246 Clark said if we issue the RFP by March we would meet the obligation of the
247 agreement.

248
249 **General Commissioner Comments**

250 Alternate Commissioner Kaynor mentioned that the graphs throughout the
251 board packet were very helpful in getting the message across.

252
253 Commissioner Bohne expressed concern about the amount of time it is
254 taking for the lift replacement, and the lack of communication to the
255 Maintenance staff. AGM Moore said that there was a Capital project
256 meeting last week and there is conversation about fast tracking this project.

257
258 Commissioner Bohne also asked what level of ridership loss we might
259 experience from UVMMC as a result of the service reductions? Director Smith
260 said staff do consider shift times and will work to make sure the changes are
261 not adversely affecting UVMMC staff.

262
263 Alternate Commissioner Derenthal asked about why we cannot have an
264 Operations Committee meeting this month? AGM Moore noted that staff
265 bandwidth was why we didn't have a January meeting, and they will come
266 back in February. GM Clark took the opportunity to mention that AGM Moore
267 is acting in an interim capacity for the vacancies in the Operations
268 Department.

269
270 Commissioner Spencer gave an update that the City of Burlington City
271 Council approved a resolution calling for a campaign for improved regional
272 or state funding. They will be looking to the GMT Board for a plan, which will
273 likely mean significant involvement from Board Commissioners. The City
274 Council is willing to help.

275
276 Chair Davis said the VT Mayors coalition was at the Legislature recently and
277 expressed support of increased public transit funding.

278
279 **Adjourn**

280 Commissioner Bohne made a motion to adjourn, Commissioner Spencer
281 seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:16AM.