



## Directors' Report

Gabriola Community Bus Foundation 2022

Annual General Meeting

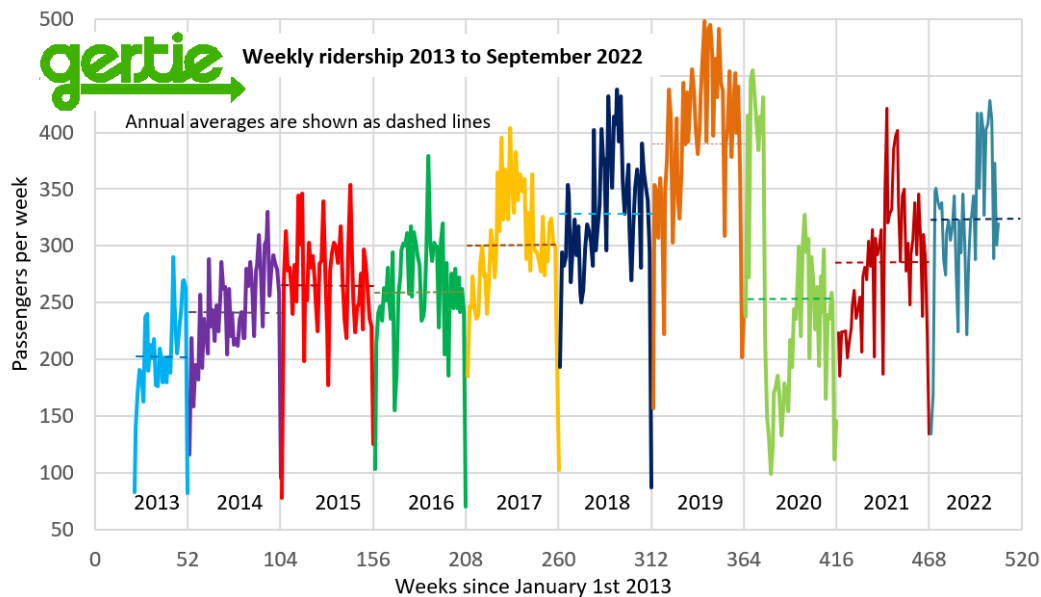
### 1. General

The purpose of this brief report is to describe some of the more significant events and trends for the Gertie operations during 2022. This report includes activities between the 2021 AGM (October) and the end of the year and the end of September 2022. This is Gertie's 9<sup>th</sup> year of operations, with service now operating 6 days a week with 3 vehicles. The Board Directors for 2022 are: Katharine Patterson, Helen Cook, Darla Jamieson, Erin Udal. Ex-officio are Susan Yates and Steven Earle.

### 2. Ridership

Ridership is slowly increasing after Covid drops and has returned to approximately 2018 levels.

Between January and September 30, Gertie provided 12,765 rides, excluding charters. Almost 2,000 rides more than 2020 and 2021 at the same point in time, but quite a bit less than the peak in 2019 of 15,880. The financial report discusses the impacts of this ridership on revenues.





### 3. Funding

The overall financial report for the year is detailed in a separate report, and the financial statements are also posted separately. Funding here refers to the status of funding grants.

#### i. Firehall CERIP Renovation

In February 2021 the GCBF was awarded capital funding from the Provincial CERIP program (Community Economic Recovery Infrastructure Program) in the amount of \$187,847 for renovations to the old Firehall located on North Road. The term of the funding goes to March 31, 2023. Renovations to the Old Fire Hall are being managed by Steve Earle with assistance from other Board members and contractors. The move to the firehall was made in December 2021. The work completed in 2022 includes:

- Plumbing: new filtration and hot water tank
- 3 Heat pumps installed
- 3 overhead garage doors installed
- Painting quotes received but due to fire risk status no work done work is postponed
- Windows and doors quotation underway

#### ii. RTSF Application

In April the Board applied to the Federal Rural Transportation Solutions Fund for a capital grant to purchase 2 electric buses.

### 4. Operations

#### i. Schedule changes

The completion of the Spruce Street connector in October 2021 triggered the revamping of route B service by reversing the direction of travel so as to pick up riders along Spruce and connecting streets to take them to the ferry and village.

On April 12, BC Ferries began the 2-ferry service schedule for Gabriola and Gertie schedules were adjusted to meet the new times. The policy to wait for ferries was terminated now that service is so frequent.

#### ii. Charters

Charters continue as an important revenue source for Gertie, and a valued function to the community.

Up to September, Gertie provided 40 SUSO (Stepping Up Stepping Out -PHC) charters and 26 other charters for Camp Miriam, weddings and other events.

#### iii. Personnel

Gertie faces ongoing challenges with hiring drivers and an interior bus cleaner. Repeated ads in the Sounder, and on Facebook community pages are continuing.



As part of the tenancy agreement with the Gabriola Fire department, Gertie drivers have received some emergency training. In addition, there were 2 field exercises simulating evacuations involving Gertie vehicles, one in March and another in August.

#### iv. Bus Shelter

A new shelter was installed at the Village bus stop in November 2021 to commemorate Dr. Mackenzie. The GCBF helped to finance the installation and update the signage.

### 5. Vehicle Maintenance and Management

It was an eventful and challenging year for Gertie vehicle maintenance wise. Snowfall in December 2021 caused a minor accident with Bertie and in February Bertie was completely disabled due to a crankshaft failure. Repair cost for a new engine was close to \$30,000 and due to supply chain shortages (Covid related) it was June before Bertie returned to service.

Pegasus was out of service for a few days in March awaiting parts (shocks) and a reduced scheduled service was carried out by Canabus for those days.

During May, Pegasus was again out of service and a rental bus was hired from Wilson's to deliver reduced scheduled service and a couple of charters. The rental bus was returned on May 25.

Impact: From January to mid-May there were 12 runs cancelled due to vehicle unavailability, and from May 16 to June 3 there were 21 runs cancelled.

### 6. Other Activities

In February the Board invited riders to fill in a "Rider Check-In Survey". The intent was to receive some feedback about the service from our riders. The survey was available online only through the Gertie website, and rider alerts were sent out to encourage participation. There were approximately 37 respondents. Generally, the respondents indicated they were satisfied with the service, vehicles, and the drivers. They also provided several comments on how to improve the service to better suit their needs. Owing to the focus on other priorities, a broader community survey was not conducted.

Gertie Board members set up a booth at the Earth Day Workshop held in the Commons on April 22. The board game showing routes and scenes was used, and free tickets were prizes. It was a successful event.

Gertie has regularly published articles in the Sounder thanks to Susan Yates for her ongoing volunteer efforts.

The Gertie Board has tentatively planned a Strategic Planning session. Erin Udal has volunteered to organize the agenda and facilitate the discussion.