



**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
DRAFT Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, December 19, 2018**

Present: Scott Bogle, Eric Eby, Denis Hebert, Colin Lentz, Marty Pepin, Dave Sandmann and Tom Wright

Absent: Donna Benton, Arthur Capello, Steve Fournier, Dave Sharples, Dennis Shanahan, Maria Stowell, Juliet Walker and Shelley Winters

Staff: Rad Nichols, Michael Williams and Heather Hesse-Stromberg

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:38 AM.

II. Public Comment

Staff Recognition

Donald Spencer was recognized for 10 years of service to COAST. He is an Operations Supervisor and is responsible for getting the fleet up and running in the mornings. In the winter he has the additional responsibility of overseeing (and participating in) cleaning snow off the fleet. Keith Dusinlleux was unable to attend the meeting but was also recognized for 10 years of service as the morning Dispatcher at COAST. Both have been dedicated employees and have kept COAST running rain or shine.

Unionization

Mr. David Holt, Lead External Organizer with the State Employees' Association of New Hampshire, Inc., attended the meeting along with Ellen Read, one of COAST's Bus Operators. Mr. Holt reported that he was approached by a number of staff to organize a union to allow for staff to have a voice at the table. Mr. Holt indicated COAST has taken actions that intimidate those interested in the union. Mr. Holt expressed that this is not a threat to COAST but rather a great opportunity. Mr. Holt indicated that drivers have spoken up for each other and for passengers and that having a union would give them a voice at the table and let them participate in planning the future.

When asked by Mr. Wright what would be better under a union, Mr. Holt stated that there's been a lot of turnover of staff and people just want to feel respected and valued and to have a voice at the table. Mr. Wright also asked if the SEA represents any other bus companies and Mr. Holt indicated they do not. Mr. Holt distributed his business card and offered to be available to answer any additional questions.

Resignation

Mr. Sandmann reported that Mr. Julian Long had submitted his resignation from the Board just prior to the start of the meeting this morning, effective immediately, both as a Member and as Treasurer. Mr. Sandmann stated that he desired to follow up with Mr. Long prior to accepting his resignation.

III. Introductions

All present introduced themselves.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Bogle made a motion to approve the minutes as presented and Mr. Hebert seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

V. Financial Report

Due to Mr. Long's resignation, Mr. Nichols presented the report on October 2018's financials.

With regard to Expenses, Mr. Nichols noted that Farebox Revenue, Contract Revenue and Advertising Revenue continue to be lower than budgeted. Collections for Advertising Revenue have been slow and ATA Outdoor has had recent turnover of their bookkeeping staff.

Expenses are also running under budget although we are starting to see the impacts of rising fuel costs. The expenses that were higher than what was budgeted were fuel and planning. The planning overage is related to the purchase of the Remix planning software.

Overall, we ended the month with a gain of \$3,700. Our available funds balance continues to decline and move farther away from our goal. The available funds are what we use for future capital purchases and monthly cash flow as needed.

VI. Old Business

Code Review and Building Assessment for Facility (42 Sumner Drive)

We have engaged our engineering firm (CMA Engineering) for a code review and building assessment of our facility at 42 Sumner Drive to ensure we are meeting all current codes that apply to us and the facility, as well as to conduct an assessment to begin to build an up to date capital improvement plan for the facility, particularly in light of our desire to redevelop the site to better meet our needs now and into the foreseeable future. Ultimately, we're looking to build a new facility.

In 2017 we had an OSHA-level compliance site review and we corrected anything that was raised as a concern.

COA Update

We have completed all the initial public forums and are currently soliciting for public input on similar tradeoffs through an online survey. To date we have had just under 300 total responses to the survey. We envision that the survey will be closed on December 21. Staff's intention is to

host a January workshop for Board members and COA Steering Committee members to discuss the results.

Next FTA Grant

We are hoping to have our next grant for 5307 and 5339 funds in to the FTA by just after the new year. These funds will support our ongoing operations, planning and capital needs for FY19 and part of FY20. The 5339 funds will be utilized to replace up to four (4) buses in the fleet.

Annual Audit

The on-site portion of our annual audit was completed during the week of December 3. The audit went very smooth with the auditors having noted nothing of concern. The auditors will continue to work on finishing up their reports through most of January. The auditors had one recommendation for how to handle the sale of advertising.

Typically, the draft audit will be presented at the January meeting for the Board to review and accept.

DoubleMAP Real-time Bus Information System

Staff continue to work on necessary adjustments to the COAST databases that drive the DoubleMAP platform. The adjustments have been more involved and time consuming than staff or the vendor had envisioned, but we are slowly working through the issues. Drivers are using the system on a daily basis on most routes as we continue to test the system and data outputs. While we had hoped it would be released and functional by now, we are looking to the end of January at this point.

Tri-City Trolley Service

Staff was approached by the Tri-City area Economic Development Directors and Chambers of Commerce to discuss the concept of a tri-city trolley service between Somersworth, Rochester and Dover. The initial meeting was more of an exploratory one. There will be another meeting after the new year. One thought is to have this be piloted for event-based service.

VII. New Business

Action Items

Action Item #1: Election of Secretary

At the October 31 meeting, Mr. Dennis Shanahan was nominated for the position of Secretary. All members were notified of Mr. Shanahan's nomination via email on November 13, 2018, more than 30 days in advance of the December 19 meeting, as required under COAST's by-laws.

The opening was created as a result of Ms. Decker's resignation from the Board.

Action Required: *That the Board of Directors elect Mr. Shanahan to the position of Secretary on the Board.*

Mr. Lentz made a motion to elect Mr. Shanahan to the position of Secretary on the Board which was seconded by Mr. Hebert. All voted in favor.

Action Item #2: Proposed Procurement Policy Revision

Proposed revisions to COAST's Procurement Policy are being recommended as a result of a number of changes recently enacted at the Federal level and to better account for changing administrative best practices as a result of incorporating technology and other new best practices.

On June 20, 2018, OMB issued memorandum OM-18-18, "Implementing Statutory Changes to the Micro-Purchase and the Simplified Acquisition Thresholds for Financial Assistance," (copy available at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/M-18-18.pdf>). In accordance with recent statutory changes set forth in the National Defense Authorization Acts (NDAA) for fiscal years 2017 and 2018, this memorandum raises the threshold for micro-purchases under Federal financial assistance awards from less than \$3,500 to \$10,000 and raises the threshold for simplified acquisitions from less than \$150,000 to \$250,000 for all recipients. The increases for micro-purchases and the simplified acquisition thresholds apply to FTA-funded procurements made on or after June 20, 2018. Changes have been proposed to our Policy to reflect these adjustments and align ourselves with the new FTA authorized thresholds.

Additionally, the FTA's requirement for an Independent Cost Estimate (ICE) for all small purchases and above has been lifted and is now only required for purchases over the simplified acquisition threshold. Changes have been proposed to our Policy to reflect this adjustment.

Finally, several minor administrative-related adjustments are being made to the Appendices of the Policy (i.e., forms & lists) to better account for the above-mentioned revisions, revised practices we use for recordkeeping (i.e., electronic), and other revisions to associated administrative elements.

Action Required: *That the Board of Directors approved the proposed Procurement Policy revision, to be effective upon voting.*

Mr. Bogle made a motion to approve the proposed Procurement Policy revision to be effective upon voting and Mr. Pepin seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Committee Reports

The Board Development Committee has not met since our last meeting.

The Executive Committee met in December in Executive Session regarding a personnel issue.

Discussion Items

ADA/DR Service Guidelines

Mr. Williams presented information about how ADA and DR scheduling work. He noted that most trips are for medical purposes or to get someone to work. Currently, ADA trips make up

about 70% of our Demand Response Services.

Our ADA customers can tell us when they want to be picked up and taken somewhere but we only have to honor one segment of their trip (for example, either the time they want to arrive somewhere or the time they want to get picked up). We are legally allowed to change someone's time by one hour, however, COAST will not change anyone's time more than 30 minutes. In addition, there is a pick-up window that is a span of 20 minutes around the time someone requests to be picked up. For example, if someone has an 8:00am pick-up time they can be picked up anywhere from 7:50am to 8:10am.

Customers have not been happy with this system and we receive regular complaints about changing of pick-up times. We are always weighing trying to increase efficiencies by keeping costs down with customer complaints.

We are using scheduling software that utilizes an algorithmic approach to scheduling and it has been helpful. There is significant variation in the number of trips per day – some days are very busy, and some are slow. In addition, weather, holidays and the time of month can impact scheduling and efficiencies.

Customers receive automated reminders telling them the vehicle is on the way to pick them up but reminders don't give an exact time. This only happens for their first ride. Mr. Hebert asked if there's a mechanism to page customers to let them know when we've arrived. Mr. Williams indicated there is not. Drivers will wait for 5 minutes for the passenger to board the vehicle once they arrive to pick someone up.

ADA service is very expensive to provide (Fixed Route costs COAST about \$6.00 to provide and Demand Response trips cost COAST about \$60.00 to provide). It is difficult to increase efficiencies in providing the service. One thing under consideration is to offer Group Shopping trips to ADA customers. Doing so at off-peak times could lower COAST's costs. Mr. Williams will pull together some analysis of how changing pickup times might increase efficiencies.

As our population ages it becomes more and more of a challenge to provide this service funding-wise. This is particularly an issue because of the absence of state funding for transportation.

Mr. Lentz suggested a Board Subcommittee regarding Legislative Advocacy and offered to be part of it. Mr. Bogle suggested we speak to Executive Councilors about getting funding for operating costs.

Mr. Wright asked how we know about legislation that might affect us and asked if we are part of any lobbying group? Mr. Nichols noted that we are prohibited from participating in any lobbying efforts and that we pay attention to legislation moving through both houses.

Mr. Hebert requested something from staff to use to when speaking with our legislators to advocate for funding for public transportation.

2020 Municipal Funding Formula & Contributions

Several issues must be considered as we prepare the FY20 municipal funding requests.

- 1) How do we continue to build toward our unrestricted reserves goal?
 - a. Local share of depreciation was \$196k in FY18 – ultimately this is the minimum we need to raise in local match to stay even with our ongoing capital program.
- 2) We have some large upcoming capital purchase needs (4 HD buses with a local match need of \$380k).
- 3) There will be systemwide ripple effects of our CMAQ funded operations coming to a conclusion during the last quarter of FY20 and fully in FY21.
 - a. Many of the expenses allocated to the CMAQ funded portions of Route 2 and the trolley system will not be eliminated or will only be marginally minimized going forward (e.g., ADA-related costs, supervision, contract services, utilities and administration).
 - b. The elimination of CMAQ funded operations will result in the elimination of STIC “bonus” funds that the region currently qualifies for.
 - c. We may find ourselves in a situation in which we do not have enough FTA 5307 funds allocated to our region on an annual basis for covering operating expenses they typically cover.
- 4) Other service adjustments and other assumptions that will be made during the last quarter of FY20.

We are likely looking at a notable increase in local match requests and/or we will have to make difficult considerations relative to just which services we prioritize for continuing beyond 2020.

We will be losing around \$1 million in funding which will leave shift more ADA costs back onto us. We will need more federal funding than what is allocated to the region. That means there will be increases to local match requests, service cuts or both.

Mr. Bogle suggested we meet with congressional delegations to advocate for more federal funding. Mr. Lentz added that, in addition to losing CMAQ funding, FAST Act funding will be going away. He recommended that municipalities meet with the congressional delegations.

VIII. Community Updates/Information Items

None.

Nonpublic Session per 91-A:3(e)

Mr. Hebert made a motion to enter a nonpublic session per NH RSA 91-A:3(e). Mr. Sandmann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously in a roll-call vote at 10:30am.

The public meeting resumed at 10:54am. Mr. Hebert made a motion to seal the minutes of the nonpublic session. Mr. Bogle seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously in a roll-call vote.

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Pepin made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Hebert. All voted in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 10:55am.