



Approved August 29, 2018

**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation  
DRAFT Minutes of the Board of Directors  
Wednesday, July 25, 2018**

**Present:** Scott Bogle (Arr. 8:37), Blaine Cox, Jennifer Decker, Denis Hebert, Colin Lentz (Arr. 8:35), Julian Long, Marty Pepin, Dave Sandmann, Dennis Shanahan, and Juliet Walker

**Absent:** Arthur Capello, Steve Fournier, Maria Stowell and Shelly Winters

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

**I. Call To Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:33 AM. Introductions of all present were made.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Hebert made a motion to accept the June 27, 2018 minutes as presented and Mr. Pepin seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

**III. Public Comment**

Mr. Nichols reported there was no public comment.

**IV. Financial Report – June Financials**

Mr. Long reported that we saw an increase in Farebox Revenue over May but saw a decrease in Advertising Revenue. He noted that wages and fringe benefits are under budget for the year but were higher in June due to significant overtime costs because of vacations, staff on medical leaves, and new staff in training. He noted that the TMA expenses are higher due to the B2B Commuter Challenge. For June we have reported a gain of \$6,224.17 and have a gain of \$13,432.86 year-to-date.

**V. Old Business**

**Operator Shortage Update**

We have hired 17 part time and full time CDL & non-CDL operators since March 1. Nine of the twelve we have begun training with have been released to driving on their own, one remains in training and two are no longer employed by COAST. During the last week of July, we will start a new training class of the five newest FT & PT operators hired. That said, we continue to have numerous unexpected or anticipated operators on various forms and lengths of FMLA leave and some operators putting off their FMLA leaves knowing how critical they are for covering daily work. We are also currently in the peak of summer vacations.

**Route 7 Service Delivery Change**

Through July 19 we have operated the new Route 7 on-demand service a total of 10 days. A total of 59 tips were booked, 5 cancelled and 2 no-showed. Riders are using non-designated stops, stops not on the former Route 7 route, 17% of the time. Over the 10 service days we

have provided 293 passenger miles of service while operating 46.6 vehicle hours and 553.4 vehicle miles. In comparison, on the former Route 7, 10 equivalent service days would have resulted in 79 vehicle hours and 1,522 vehicle miles operated. Mr. Nichols noted that ridership is not as high as when the service was operated as a fixed route, but it is a much more efficient use of COAST resources. The new service saved money, is meeting the demand of riders and used 1/3 of the vehicle hours the fixed route service used.

### **Systemwide Retiming**

The system retiming has been in effect for a few weeks, and we are still reviewing initial results. Due to day-to-day variability with construction detours, accidents on the road, summertime traffic and other potential delays, we will not have a strong picture until we get data across a larger time period. However, it appears general on time performance has improved, with the previous worst performing route (Route 6) seeing the most dramatic improvement. We identified one problem on Trolley breaks which was causing some late buses and have rearranged delivery of these breaks to solve that problem. We have received many positive comments from customers regarding the new schedules, as well as a variety of comments from customers still working to adjust to the new times. The new late Saturday 2N run has averaged 14 passengers in its first two weeks; a very positive result so soon after the change.

### **Portsmouth Senior Transportation**

We continue in the marketing and outreach phase of the transition. Our first outreach meeting was held on Thursday, June 28 at the monthly Senior Luncheon. We have been on-site at the Portsmouth Housing Authority to advise their staff on the transition and new services that will be offered. We kicked off volunteer driver recruitment on July 10 and have had nearly 10 individuals sign up (partially) to date. Our next outreach meeting will be at the July 26 Senior Luncheon, at which we will hand out applications.

Direct outreach is being made with all current riders, through an introductory letter, explanation of services we will operate, and copies of applications that we are asking to be returned. The applications provide COAST with the information needed to determine if individuals are eligible for this service based on age and/or a disability, as well as to obtain the contact information we will need to understand rider's travel needs and reach out to them.

We continue to put all the pieces in place to prepare for the October 1 switchover.

## **VI. New Business**

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **Action Item #1: Revised Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA) Project Timeline**

After the presentation at the June Board meeting, staff further fleshed out the project timeline. We anticipate the document will continue to change as we add elements and tasks.

**Action Required:** *That the Board of Directors adopt the revised COA Project Timeline for staff to utilize and move forward.*

Ms. Walker noted that it will be important to build in a cushion for the timeline as much as possible. Mr. Nichols reported that COAST intends to use a firm to help with the facilitation of

public meetings and staff to do the bulk of the analysis (Mr. Nichols, Mr. Williams and Ms. Polychronis). Mr. Bogle suggested the use of input.com for online surveying of the public. He noted that RPC has been using it and he believes he can make it available to organizations with whom RPC works.

*Mr. Bogle made a motion to adopt the revised COA Project Timeline for staff to utilize and move forward and Mr. Pepin seconded the motion. All voted in favor.*

**Action Item #2: Initial COA Public Communications Plan**

Mr. Nichols presented the initial COA Public Communications Plan. The plan includes communication with all potential stakeholders and general schedule of COAST's public information meetings, surveys and presentations to communities.

**Action Required:** *That the Board of Directors adopt the initial COA Public Communications Plan for staff to utilize and move forward.*

Mr. Shanahan suggested that talking points for Board members would be very helpful and Mr. Nichols stated he would put talking points together. Mr. Nichols reported that he would be going to each community to present the COA and will let Board members know when he's going to their community. Ms. Walker and Mr. Long stressed that Mr. Nichols should get on the Agenda of these meetings rather than presenting during Public Comment.

Mr. Shanahan made a motion that the Board of Directors adopt the initial COA Public Communications Plan for staff to utilize and move forward and Mr. Long seconded. All voted in favor.

**Action Item #3: Procurement of Software to Support the COA**

Staff have identified two pieces of software that will be critical for gathering, analyzing, working with data and communicating impacts of service considerations with the public.

First is a real-time vehicle information system. On the public side, these systems provide passengers with real-time updates on specific buses and routes, integrates travel planning and can push notifications to mobile devices. On the operations side, these systems allow for much more integrated dispatching, reporting and planning at micro and macro levels. Most important to us for the COA is bus stop level ridership by route, day, time of day and direction of travel (where the same stop is served in both directions). While we do currently collect this data, it is likely not collected at a level that would be considered statistically valid for the COA.

We are currently working with three different vendors to: (1) ensure they all can meet our needs, and (2) solicit quotes. We fully expect that this purchase can be made under small purchase thresholds (\$150,000), including three years of service and support.

Second is a transit scheduling, planning and design software package called Remix. Mr. Nichols presented a Demo of the Remix product at the meeting. It was very well

received. The package that we are looking at can provide immediate feedback on how proposed changes to the transit routes can impact the overall network. It is based on multiple custom layers of geocoded data, census data for example, that can be uploaded onto the platform and integrated into decision making. Interestingly, it also has a public side that can be used to illustrate proposed changes and be “played with” by users accessing it to see if they can come up with something better. It is an incredibly powerful tool with incredibly meaningful outputs for an agency such as COAST.

Additionally, the available scheduling feature can generate new bus schedules, block operator work schedules, and produce daily worksheets for operators; all extremely time consuming when done by hand such as we do now. This will also likely be a small purchase, although a sole source, since this is the only product currently available for this type of planning and scheduling.

Remix allows COAST to have unlimited users. The contract would be for a period of 2 years with no obligation to continue. After the 2<sup>nd</sup> year the pricing would be adjusted based on our fleet size.

Both software products will allow COAST staff to better manage the COA project, while also providing new functionality for our riders and stakeholders to use our system.

**Action Required:** *That the Board of Directors support the Executive Director moving forward with these procurements under his small purchasing authority and the availability of capital and planning funds specifically for this purpose.*

Members expressed excitement at the prospect of both pieces of software and the benefit they would each provide to both COAST staff and COAST’s customers.

Mr. Hebert made a motion to support the Executive Director moving forward with these procurements under his small purchasing authority and the availability of capital and planning funds specifically for this purpose and Mr. Bogle seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Nominating Committee**

Mr. Lentz noted that the committee has a high degree of confidence in the current leadership of the Board and reminded members that the slate of Officers they are nominating are:

Chair	David Sandmann, At-Large
Vice-Chair	Juliet Walker, Portsmouth
Secretary	Jennifer Decker, Granite State Independent Living
Treasurer	Julian Long, Rochester

The election will be held at the Annual Meeting on September 26, 2018.

**Executive Committee:** Did not meet.

**Board Development Committee:** Did not meet.

## **Discussion Items**

### **Discussion Item #1: FY19 Operating Budget Considerations**

Mr. Nichols presented some of the challenges to be considered in preparing the FY19 Budget. They included:

1. Demand Response Growth  
Demand is growing at a faster pace than other services (10% growth FY18 to date). TripLink is implementing strategies, along with the new software, to increase efficiencies. As a result the projected growth for FY19 is 5%.
2. Fare and Contract Revenues  
The Clipper Connection services continue to see a flattening demand that is much lower than in years past.
3. Volatility of Markets  
The volatility of fuel, parts, health insurance and liability insurance can have a tremendous impact on the operating budget.
4. New Demand Response Services  
There are several Demand Response Programs to consider as the budget is built, including:
  - 5310 Purchase of Service (Community Rides)
  - Non-Emergency Medicaid
  - Accessible Volunteer Driver Program trips
  - Portsmouth Senior Transportation
  - Route 7 On Demand
  - Volunteer Driver Program in the Tri-City area (Dover, Rochester, Somersworth)

The Draft FY19 Operating Budget will be presented at the August Board Meeting.

### **Discussion Item #2: 2019 Board Strategic Objectives**

Mr. Sandmann suggested that the Board develop an Ad Hoc Committee to meet in August to review the Board Strategic Objectives and make a presentation at the August Board Meeting. The following people offered to be part of the Committee: Mr. Sandmann, Mr. Bogle, Ms. Lentz and Ms. Decker.

### **Discussion Item #3: August Board Meeting**

A request to move the August meeting to August 29<sup>th</sup> was made. All agreed. The meeting will be Wednesday, August 29<sup>th</sup> from 8:30-10:00 at 6 Sumner Drive.

## **VII. Community Updates/Information Items**

### **Board Member Giving**

COAST would like to apply for a multi-year NH Charitable Foundation unrestricted grant that will be used primarily to support COAST's volunteer driver programs, TripLink, and other demand

response activities. However, the NH Charitable Foundation requires that every member of a Board of Directors make a financial donation to their organization. There is no minimum donation, but 100% Board-giving is required. We explained to the Foundation that COAST's Board is comprised of individuals who represent municipalities or agencies who provide us with a great deal of funding, but there are no exceptions.

A small donation by Board members (\$25.00 each was suggested) would allow COAST to apply for up to \$20,000 of unrestricted grant money per year for 3 years and would help us expand our work on behalf of senior and individuals with disabilities.

Mr. Nichols confirmed that the donation must be collected before they can apply for the grant. All donors will be sent a receipt for tax purposes.

#### Route 41

Mr. Hebert asked if anything has come about because of Mr. Nichols' response to the request to realign Route 41. Mr. Nichols noted that he has not received any further communication from anyone regarding the realignment.

#### Annual Meeting

Mr. Nichols reported that COAST is looking for a location to have its Annual Meeting and will put out information as soon as it is available. The meeting will be Wednesday, September 26, 2018.

#### Workforce Housing Charrette

Mr. Long informed members that Rochester is partnering with the Workforce Housing Coalition of the Greater Seacoast and hosting a workforce housing charrette on September 26 and September 28 at the Rochester Performance & Arts Center.

#### Approval of Mr. Blaine Cox as Alternate for Rochester

Mr. Pepin made a motion to accept Mr. Blaine Cox as the Alternate representative for the City of Rochester which Ms. Decker seconded. All voted in favor.

#### Ridership & Other Performance Measures

Ridership and other performance measures were presented in the Board Packet.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

Mr. Pepin made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Ms. Decker. The meeting was adjourned at 10:01 AM.