



**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
Minutes of the Board of Directors
Wednesday, September 25, 2019**

- Present:** Scott Bogle, Arthur Capello, Jim Campbell, Valerie Labrie, Colin Lentz, Martin Pepin, David Sandmann, Dennis Shanahan and Shelley Winters
- Absent:** Steve Fournier, Denis Hebert, Dave Sharples, Maria Stowell, Juliet Walker and Thomas Wright
- Guests:** NHDOT Commissioner Victoria Sheehan, Patrick Herlihy
- Staff:** Rad Nichols, Michael Williams, Heather Hesse-Stromberg

I. Call to Order

Mr. Sandmann called the meeting to order at 10:26 AM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Pepin made a motion to accept the August minutes as presented and Mr. Lentz seconded. All voted in favor.

III. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

IV. Financial Report

Mr. Nichols presented the August financials. In reviewing the Income Statement, he noted that August saw an increase in advertising revenue. Expenses saw an increase in the wage line as new wages were in full effect, and the fringe line reflects the significant amount of vacation time in August. Overall, we remain 10% under budget in revenues and 12.4% under budget in expenses. We remain short-staffed, so are not paying out the wages for those open positions, but we are paying significant overtime to cover the work that is open due to the open driving positions. Mr. Shanahan noted that, while we are back to full service, we are still short of staff so the problem may arise again.

Our available funds balance is up over \$855K bringing our unrestricted net asset ratio up above 15%.

V. Old Business

Fare Considerations

Mr. Nichols went over the revised fare recommendation that had been sent to Board Members by email (which was the same as had been recommended at the August meeting). Members were asked to concur so staff would be comfortable moving forward. A total of six concurrences were received. There were no further questions raised and staff will move forward with the recommendation.

VI. New Business

Action Items

Action Item #1: Election of Officers for 2020

Members of the Nominating Committee are, Mr. Bogle, Mr. Capello, Mr. Fournier, Mr. Lentz and Mr. Pepin. After consulting with the current officers and reaching out to other members, it was determined that the following slate of officers is being recommended for the coming year.

Officer Nominees:

- Chair: Dave Sandmann (At-Large)
- Vice-Chair: Juliet T.H. Walker (City of Portsmouth)
- Secretary: Dennis Shanahan (City of Dover)
- Treasurer: Arthur Capello (Town of Farmington)

Executive Committee:

Based on the By-Laws the Executive Committee shall automatically consist of the following representatives: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Past-Officer, one member to be appointed by the Chair and the Executive Director (non-voting member).

With the proposed slate of officers, the Executive Committee would be comprised of the following members:

- Dave Sandmann (Chair)
- Juliet T.H. Walker (Vice Chair)
- Dennis Shanahan (Secretary)
- Arthur Capello (Treasurer)
- Scott Bogle (Past Officer)
- Open (Chair's Appointee)
- Rad Nichols (Non-voting)

Action Required: That the Board of Directors elect the FY2020 Board Officers and direct the Chairman take steps to fill the available Executive Committee seats if deemed necessary.

Mr. Bogle made a motion to elect the FY2020 Board Officers and direct the Chairman to take steps to fill the available Executive Committee seats, if deemed necessary. Mr. Campbell seconded. Mr. Sandmann was thanked for his willingness to continue to serve as Chair and all voted in favor.

Action Item #2: FY20 Board Meeting Calendar

The draft FY2020 COAST Board meeting schedule was presented. With a few exceptions (noted with an '*'), the schedule follows the previously agreed upon schedule of the fourth Wednesday of every month at 8:30 am. Meetings will be held in the conference room at COAST's Administrative Offices at 6 Sumner Drive in Dover, NH.

October 23, 2019

November 20, 2019 *

December 18, 2019 *

January 22, 2020

February 26, 2020

March 25, 2020

April 15, 2020 *

May 27, 2020

June 24, 2020

July 22, 2020

August 26, 2020

September 23, 2020

Action Required: *That the Board of Directors review and approve the proposed FY20 meeting calendar.*

Mr. Sandmann suggested that the February meeting may be canceled as he will be out of town. Mr. Lentz made a motion to approve the proposed FY20 meeting calendar and Mr. Shanahan seconded. All voted in favor.

Action Item #3: FY20 Draft Operating Budget

Mr. Nichols indicated that the budget remains the same as what was presented at the August meeting but that it has been updated to include the Coordination and TMA lines.

Mr. Nichols reviewed that the FY20 budget is a 1.8% increase over the FY2019 budget and that the budget is based upon a 2.8% base inflationary rate using the Northeast CPI for Transportation.

Action Required: *That the Board of Directors approve the FY20 Operating Budget.*

Mr. Campbell made a motion to accept the FY Operating Budget and Mr. Bogle seconded. All voted in favor.

Action Item #4: Proposed Weapons Policy for Employee Handbook

In May of 2018 the COAST Executive Committee held a meeting at which a proposed weapons policy was discussed for inclusion in the Employee Handbook. Mr. Nichols noted that we are trying to walk the line between the rights of employees to 'carry' versus the safety of our employees. He noted that some of our female employees working at night would like to have some form of protection, for example pepper spray, for their safety.

The main points of the policy are:

1. Firearms would only be allowed on COAST property if they are locked in the trunk of the employee's vehicle, unloaded, with ammunition stored elsewhere in the vehicle.
2. Pepper spray, etc. will be permitted as a means for employees to protect themselves while on duty.

The proposed policy does not make any changes to our policy about passengers/visitors bringing weapons on our vehicles or property.

As drafted, the policy addresses how to handle the situation of employees bringing weapons onto COAST property. We know we have several employees who 'carry', and we do not wish to impede their right to do so on their way to and from work. Ultimately our goal, through the implementation of this policy, is to make COAST as safe as possible for all employees.

Action Required: *That the Board of Directors approve the Weapons Policy as presented.*

Mr. Nichols noted that not all COAST employees park on COAST property (for example, in Newmarket and Farmington, and the Administrative Office at 6 Sumner). He further indicated that the policy is based on the language in state law.

Mr. Pepin made a motion to approve the Weapons Policy as presented and Mr. Shanahan seconded. Mr. Bogle, Mr. Campbell, Ms. Labrie, Mr. Lentz, Mr. Pepin, Mr. Sandmann and Mr. Shanahan voted in favor. Mr. Capello voted opposed, noting if we can legally carry in NH COAST should allow it.

The motion passed.

Committee Reports

Nominating Committee – did not meet.

Policy Committee – Mr. Nichols noted that the Policy Committee will be meeting prior to the next Board meeting.

Executive Committee – did not meet.

Board Development Committee – did not meet.

VII. Community Updates/Information Items

Commissioner Sheehan was recognized by Chairman Sandmann and invited to speak.

Commissioner Sheehan noted that she would like to speak on a few issues in hopes of encouraging COAST to best position itself for a successful future

She raised concerns about whether COAST followed its Advertising Policy in reviewing the University of Maine advertisement. She noted that as we talk about what role the private sector may play in financially supporting COAST, we will want to be sure to follow our policy. In addition, she suggested a review of the policy to see if any changes are needed to the review and approval or disapproval process.

In addition, she noted that COAST needs to be creative in looking for funding streams and mitigating the loss of federal funds. Mr. Herlihy added that NHDOT could facilitate conversations between the transit companies to get a better sense of the funding streams of each organization.

Commissioner Sheehan noted that she is unable to speak to the unmet needs of public transit through the GACIT process, because there is no data upon which she can rely. While she knows there is a gap in available funding, she is not able to speak specifically to how big the gap is without knowing what isn't getting funded or what isn't being proposed because of the lack of funding. She has asked for the other transit companies to provide information like COAST does, so NHDOT can get a better sense of this across the state.

Commissioner Sheehan noted that it will be important for COAST to have a diverse board to successfully educate the public on transit. She suggested we look at changing the language in our statute to more clearly articulate our Board membership. She indicated she would be willing to help encourage people to participate on the Board.

Mr. Bogle spoke to the difficulties in determining unmet transit needs and the efforts that are underway to best indicate what those unmet needs are.

Mr. Pepin thanked Commissioner Sheehan for coming and noted the difficulties Somersworth has had in funding COAST as requested. He stressed that he can't emphasize enough how important COAST is but, because COAST appears in the budget as a non-profit, funding could be cut at any moment.

Ms. Winters noted that storytelling is a great way to show the impact of COAST and can also educate the public on public transit. The Commissioner noted that the deadline to get the 10-year plan to the Governor is December 15. She suggested that we pull together stories and start now getting people organized to come testify before the House. The bill to look for is HB2020.

Mr. Capello left at 11:10 AM.

Commissioner closed by stating that the NHDOT will include any data the transit companies can provide in their presentation to the House and Senate, but we as an organization need to have those difficult financial conversations.

I. Adjournment

Mr. Pepin made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Campbell seconded. All voted in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 AM.