



**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Wednesday, December 14, 2022**

PRESENT: Kendra Amaral (virtual), Scott Bogle, Sönke Dornblut (8:45am), Robert Gibson (8:53am), Denis Hebert, Margaret Joyce, Colin Lentz, Kristen Murphy, David Sandmann, Mike Scala, Dennis Shanahan

ABSENT: Fred Butler, Benjamin Fletcher, Lauren Haley, Nick Taylor, Thomas Wright

STAFF: Rad Nichols, Margot Doering, Michael Williams, Gerry Lizotte, James Nisbet

I. CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting was called to order at 8:38am by Mr. Shanahan.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Shanahan asked if a motion could be made to approve the minutes of the November 16, 2022 meeting. Mr. Sandmann made the motion to accept the minutes as drafted, and Mr. Bogle seconded the motion. There was no discussion and Mr. Shanahan undertook the vote by roll call.

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Ms. Murphy	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Abstain
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes

The motion passed unanimously with abstentions.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Nichols recognized two employees who have reached milestone anniversaries at COAST, Mr. Lizotte and Mr. Nisbet.

Mr. Lizotte is a part time Demand Response Operator on our staff who has reached his 10-year anniversary. Mr. Nichols, Williams, and Ms. Doering all commented how Mr. Lizotte has been a tremendous employee who goes above and beyond for the organization and his passengers on a regular basis. He is much appreciated and respected amongst staff and his passengers.

Mr. Nisbet is a full time Fixed Route Operator on our staff who has reached his 20-year anniversary. Mr. Nichols and Williams both commented how Mr. Nisbet is another extremely well liked and respected employee amongst his peers and passengers.

The board expressed their appreciation to both Mr. Lizotte and Nisbet and asked a number of questions related to their employment and experiences at COAST.

VI. FINANCIALS

Ms. Doering noted that the financials being discussed were our final October figures, which had been adjusted slightly since they were first presented in preliminary form in November.

There were no significant changes other than the final coordination numbers being represented.

Ms. Doering gave a quick update on what she had input for November to date other than there were no big surprises. Advertising revenues were very strong for the month.

There were no questions for Ms. Doering.

Mr. Lizotte and Nisbet left the meeting and Mr. Gibson arrived.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Staffing

Mr. Williams gave an update on current staffing. He noted some significant success in hiring over the past couple of months, including two former employees. All new hires have been referrals from our current staff.

Our most recent trainees, one full time CDL Operator and one part time CDL Operator, have been released to full driving duties.

We are currently planning on lifting additional service suspensions in mid-January as we have been able to hire new staff and have staff returning to their driving duties that have been out on extended FMLA leave.

Further lifting of service suspensions (returning to full budgeted Saturday service levels) will likely have to wait until we can solve a dispatcher shortage on Saturdays and when our regularly scheduled operator picks line up.

Annual Audit

Ms. Doering gave an update on the audit to date. She noted updates to the asset records she has been working on in coordination with the auditors.

The onsite portion of our annual audit was completed this week, with no issues being raised by the auditors. The audit will continue through December and early January. We expect to be able to accept the audit at the January board meeting.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

ACTION ITEMS

Action Item #1: Approval for CY23 Strafford County Funding Application

Mr. Nichols gave an overview of the CY23 Strafford County Funding application. As a partner in COAST Route 33 and associated ADA operations in Dover, Strafford County contributes financially to COAST. They have been doing so for approximately 10 years at this point. This year the request in support of these operations was \$57,662.

For the 3rd year now, consideration for support of ACT/TripLink operations was also included in the funding application (\$8,000).

The County operates on a calendar year (CY) cycle. COAST is requesting a total of \$65,662 of financial support in this upcoming CY23 cycle.

A requirement for submission is that the request be reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors.

The terms and conditions of the Strafford County “Contract for Services” are agreeable.

Action Requested: *The COAST Board of Directors approve the submission of COAST’s CY23 funding request of Strafford County and authorize the Executive Director, Mr. Nichols, to act on behalf of the organization, in submitting the application.*

Mr. Sandmann moved the action as requested, and Ms. Joyce seconded the motion. There was no discussion and Mr. Shanahan undertook the vote by roll call.

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Mr. Dornblut	Yes
Mr. Gibson	Yes
Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Ms. Murphy	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Yes
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item #2: New Account Authorization for Chase Bank

Mr. Nichols discussed how we are diversifying our banking relationships.

To open a new account with Chase Bank we must provide them with a board resolution stating the name of the authorized representative(s) and account signers. Authorized representative(s) is/are the individuals who have the authority to open/close accounts and make signer changes.

Action Requested: The COAST Board of Directors authorize the Chair to execute a board resolution for Chase Bank identifying COAST’s Authorized Representative as Mr. Rad Nichols, Executive Director, and COAST’s Account Signers as Mr. Rad Nichols, Executive Director and Mr. Scott Bogle, Treasurer. Under this resolution the Executive Director, Mr. Nichols, is fully authorized to act on behalf of the organization in opening a new account with Chase Bank.

Mr. Lentz moved the action as requested, and Mr. Sandmann seconded the motion. Mr. Shanahan asked if there was any discussion.

Mr. Lentz asked why we were seeking to diversify our banking relationships. Ms. Doering explained we need additional FDIC protection and additional services like fraud detection and prevention.

With no further discussion Mr. Shanahan undertook a roll call vote.

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Mr. Dornblut	Yes
Mr. Gibson	Yes
Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Ms. Murphy	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Yes
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item #3: CommuteSMART TMA CMAQ Application Support Letter

Mr. Nichols apologized for this item not being in the meeting packet but it is the result of a webinar he attended the day before.

We are requesting \$560,000 of CMAQ funds through the NHDOT in support of re-starting the CommuteSMART Seacoast TMA. We are requesting a letter of support from the Board for our application.

Mr. Bogle made a motion for the organization to prepare a letter of support for the application, and Mr. Sandmann seconded the motion. Mr. Shanahan opened the motion up for discussion.

Mr. Nichols added that the RPCs have helped us with both the preparation and potentially staffing of the TMA.

With no more discussion Mr. Shanahan undertook a roll call vote.

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Mr. Dornblut	Yes
Mr. Gibson	Yes
Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Ms. Murphy	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Yes
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item #4: Executive Director Annual Review and Compensation

Mr. Shanahan explained that this item was also new to the agenda. The previous Friday the Executive Committee met in a non-public session to discuss the Executive Director's evaluation and determining a compensation plan for the current year.

Mr. Shanahan gave an overview of Mr. Nichols' review, noting significant achievements in the past year, and referred members to an outline of Executive Committee recommended compensation changes that had been handed out to board members.

Mr. Shanahan made the motion to accept the Executive Committee's recommendation, and Mr. Sandmann seconded the motion. Mr. Shanahan opened the motion up for discussion. Members noted the successes of the year and support for the motion.

With no more discussion Mr. Shanahan undertook a roll call vote.

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Mr. Dornblut	Yes
Mr. Gibson	Yes
Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Ms. Murphy	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Yes
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee – met in non-public session on Friday, December 9.

Board Development Committee – outreach to fill open positions on the board is ongoing.

Policy Committee – did not meet, however we are working with NHTA and Senator Perkins Kwoka on a potential LSR regarding audio recording onboard public transit buses (in addition to the video recording happening today).

There was discussion around minors.

Legislative Committee – did not meet, but language for a proposed amendment to allow audio recording onboard our buses was submitted, with the input of key NHTA members, to Senator Watters and Perkins-Kwoka for their consideration.

Finance Committee – scheduled to meet on Monday, December 12 (2:30pm, Rochester City Hall Annex, 2nd floor Conference Room).

Discussion Items

Discussion Item #1: FY22 Impact Report

Mr. Nichols gave an overview of the report, highlighting the following:

- Overview of COAST over the past 40 years
- Services we provide (fixed route and demand response)
- Regional coordination efforts through the Alliance for Community Transportation (ACT)
- How we impacted lives in FY2022
- Four year ridership overview (FY19-22)
- Ongoing staffing challenges (bus operators) and service suspensions
- COVID-19 impacts on staff during the year
- New facility
- Federal Government: grant awards and changes coming out of Washington and their potential impacts
- State Government: grant awards and the need for increased state operating funds to match IJJA funding now coming into the state.
- Operations overview
- COAST in the community
- Financial overview
- FY23 goals

Discussion Item #2: Draft FY24 Municipal Funding Formula & Requests

Mr. Nichols introduced the materials he had produced to date in a first cut at the FY24 formula and resulting requests. As discussed at the September budget workshop, municipal requests are projected to need to increase by a minimum of 12% overall in FY24.

He explained the updates to the factors used in the formula and details on the projection of our bottom line request need, which was based on the latest 5 year operating and capital projections.

VII. Community Updates/Information Items

Ridership

Mr. Nichols went over ridership in November.

- Overall ridership in November totaled 21,136. This was down 8.4% from October, partially due to one fewer operating day in the month. Ridership was 0.8% above ridership achieved in November 2021.
- Fixed route ridership totalled 19,244, down 8.6% from September. Ridership was also down by 0.9% from November 2021. A reminder, we are currently providing significantly less fixed route service when making comparisons to November 2021.
- After previously peaking at 2,016 in October, demand response ridership in November totalled 1,892, the second highest ridership level since the pandemic began. This represented an 6.2% decrease in ridership from October and a 23.2% increase over November 2021.

Mr. Sandmann asked about how things were going with the Passio transition. Mr. Williams noted that the core issues remain, although some small incremental improvements have been made. Intermittent issues continue to frustrate. Things are on an upward trajectory but at a much slower pace than desired.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Shanahan adjourned the meeting, without objection, at 10:06am.

Respectfully submitted by Margaret Joyce, Secretary