



**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
DRAFT Minutes of the Board of Directors
Wednesday, March 26, 2025**

Present: Kendra Amaral (virtual), Scott Bogle, Fred Butler (virtual), Arthur Capello, Sönke Dornblut (virtual – arr. 9:05), Emily Ham, Jillian Harris (virtual), Margaret Joyce, Colin Lentz, Dave Sandmann (virtual), Michael Scala, Dennis Shanahan, David Tovey (virtual)

Absent: Denis Hebert, Michael Mates, Joann Neumann, Crystal Paradis-Catanzaro

Staff: Rad Nichols, Michael Williams, Margot Doering, Vanessa Polychronis, Heather Hesse-Stromberg

Guest: David Lemay, Rochester resident

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:37 am with a quorum present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Lentz made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 26, 2025 board meeting which was seconded by Mr. Bogle. There were no comments, questions, or revisions.

Mr. Shanahan took the vote by roll call:

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Mr. Capello	Yes
Ms. Ham	Yes
Ms. Harris	Abstain
Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Yes
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes
Mr. Tovey	Yes

The minutes were approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Nichols reported that Paul Estabrook, a Demand Response driver with COAST since April of 2009, recently received an award for reaching 5 years without a preventable collision.

Mr. Nichols shared that Saturday, March 22 was COAST's first Fare Free Saturday, sponsored by Cross Insurance. He noted that there was a 20% increase in Fixed Route ridership that day, with Route 33 seeing an increase of 71%, and Route 43 seeing an increase of 50%. He shared that our ADA paratransit service had two fewer riders than the previous Saturday. Mr. Nichols expects the ridership impacts to

increase on future Fare Free Saturdays. The upcoming dates are April 19, sponsored by Piscataqua Savings Bank, and May 24, sponsored by Breezeline.

Mr. Scala asked how Fare Free Saturday is marketed and Mr. Nichols reported that signage is posted on the vehicle in advance, the website provides information, we send out a press release and it is promoted on social media.

IV. FINANCIALS

Ms. Doering noted that in February there is a negative amount in "Interest and Other Income" which is due to \$6,000 COAST returned to the government for a bus we sold last year.

Ms. Doering reported that Advertising revenue continues to be lower than we'd like, but that historically the Advertising line-item experiences great fluctuations. She noted that we are seeing a steady stream of contracts coming in, so it seems to be a matter of collections. Ms. Doering pointed out that the municipal match numbers are off a little and she hasn't figured out the source of the issue yet but will investigate. Materials and supplies expenses are low, but we anticipate engine repairs that will bring us up to our projected expenses on that line item.

Ms. Doering noted that we had to start putting commuteSMART expenses into the budget in February but clarified that we don't yet have that position fully funded or a person hired for that position.

On the Balance Sheet she noted that two (2) communities have paid their entire contribution up front so this amount is higher than it normally would be. She shared that building donations that are restricted will be reflected in designated net assets but are kept separate to be able to watch what happens over the year.

V. OLD BUSINESS

Board Member Resignation

Shortly after our February meeting, staff were informed by McNabb Properties that Ms. Sawyer was no longer with the company. Ms. Sawyer was representing a developer in the region and her absence leaves an open At-Large seat. Ms. Sawyer has subsequently reached out to apologize for leaving the board and to thank the organization for welcoming her over her short time at COAST.

New Bus Shelters

Mr. Nichols shared that due to significant new cost increases for the bus shelters we have been purchasing over the past 10+ years, we recently solicited quotes from multiple other vendors. Unfortunately, costs are rising rapidly, largely due to the significant use of aluminum in bus shelter construction.

The vendor that offers a similar style to the shelters we have been ordering is Tolar Manufacturing. The roof style is changing (not quite as ornate) for new shelters and, while we had hoped to buy four (4), because of the price we're only purchasing three (3).

State Operating Investment Advocacy

Mr. Nichols reported that, as the NHTA Chair, he attended a public transit focused budget work session of the House Finance Division II Committee on March 7. He shared that the Committee listened intently and asked questions. On Monday, March 24 the committee discussed increasing the price of vanity plates and targeting some of the fees to public transit (expect to raise \$6M annually). They also voted on including \$1.5M in funding for public transit in the budget. For FY26 and FY27, the legislature is close to level-funding what we're receiving in FY25. We will keep working on advocacy to help this pass through.

SFY25 5339(a) Grant Award

Mr. Nichols reported that on March 18 COAST was notified by the NHDOT that we had been awarded \$1,215,593 of 5339(a) funds to purchase two (2) 35' HD transit buses and one (1) small cutaway bus. This reflects the full amount of what we had requested.

New Gillig Bus Order

Mr. Nichols shared that staff are working closely with the NHDOT to place an order as soon as possible for up to four (4) new Gillig buses which was approved during January's board meeting. We hope through Amendment #1 of the 2025-2028 State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) we will be able to move forward with the rest of the order this summer, up to a total of six (6) new 35' HD Gillig buses. Gillig has agreed to honor the pricing on the buses even though the Virginia contract expires in April.

Mr. Capello asked about how tariffs will impact COAST. Mr. Nichols reported that we expect that the price of buses made in America will increase because the bus manufacturers rely on vendors who are impacted by tariffs for their parts. Mr. Nichols does not expect our pricing will be impacted this round. He noted that there are only two US bus manufacturers, Gillig and New Flyer.

Fundraising Update

Mr. Nichols reported that we are working with Kennebunk Savings Bank on a small event to accept a "big" check from their new CEO this afternoon. Their marketing staff will be shooting a short video around the delivery of the check. The bank is also up for encouraging other peer banks to join them in their leadership gift toward COAST.

Mr. Nichols stated that unfortunately, our planned event in Somersworth for April 1 had to be postponed. We are now in full swing planning for the Learn & Engage event with the Chamber Collaborative and City in Portsmouth on April 22. The mayor has been confirmed as a panelist, Ben Van Camp will be hosting, and Shaheen and Gordon will be our sponsor. We have secured The Hundred Club as the venue courtesy of Piscataqua Savings Bank.

We continue to seek one-on-one meetings with select individuals and companies who can introduce us to other philanthropists and/or consider donations of their own. April has a lot of events, podcasts, and meetings with rotaries and other groups.

commuteSMART Seacoast

Mr. Nichols shared that getting commuteSMART Seacoast up and running has been delayed. While we are hoping to get the grant in soon, due to its eco-focus, which is not a priority of the current administration, this program could be at risk.

VI. New Business

Action Items

Action Item #1: Customer Code of Conduct Policy Amendment

Mr. Williams presented a revision to the Code of Conduct based on a recommendation of the JLMC and the discussion at the February Board Meeting. Revisions include:

- A bullet was added under "Other" things that customers are not permitted to do, adding "Steal from COAST, its employees, or customers."
- The Consequences of Misconduct chart was expanded and sorted into three classes of violations, with lengths of ban for each. This significantly increases our response to many different categories of offense (including vaping on board and leaving behind hypodermic needles) while leaving some room for our judgment. Theft was split into two categories. General theft is a Class 2 (minimum of 1 year), while theft of personally identifying items is a Class 3.
- A "Suspension Appeals" section was added. Bans of longer than 90 days can be appealed meeting specific requirements (documentation) with the burden on customers to prove changes.

Action Required: *To consider and approve the amended Customer Code of Conduct.*

Mr. Capello asked who the appeals would go to because it is not spelled out. Mr. Williams believed it would be himself and Mr. Nichols or HR. This would not be so much a challenge to the initial determination, just providing evidence that behavior has changed. Mr. Williams noted he would add that the Director of Operations and a second member of the management staff as the appeals board.

Mr. Capello made a motion to consider and approve the amended Customer Code of Conduct which was seconded by Mr. Lentz with the additional amendment of adding the Appeal Board to the appeal process and contingent on JLMC review and approval.

Ms. Ham asked who would decide between a ban of two years to permanent. Mr. Williams noted it would be staff who make those decisions based on the specific situation, not the Board of Directors. Mr. Williams noted that these changes were based on the JLMC asking for a review of the one-year ban, feeling it was insufficient under the previous policy. In addition to the review of the amended Customer Code of Conduct, the one-year ban of the customer who stole the employee's wallet is under review to determine if it should be a permanent ban. Mr. Williams noted that the customer involved has now been found and arrested. Mr. Capello asked if the JLMC has looked at these amendments and are in support of the new policy. Mr. Williams indicated that they have not.

Mr. Capello offered to withdraw his motion if Mr. Lentz would withdraw his second, until the JLMC has had a chance to look at the revised policy and give their feedback on it. Mr. Shanahan asked Mr. Capello if we could make the approval contingent on the review and support of the JLMC so it could be finalized today. Mr. Capello agreed to modify his motion.

Mr. Shanahan restated the amended motion to approve the changes to the Customer Code of Conduct contingent on JLMC review at their meeting in April. Ms. Ham asked if the Board would be the decision maker for the specific ban in question. Mr. Williams noted that the JLMC had requested that the Board make a decision on that ban. Mr. Capello stated that that would be a separate vote or separate discussion from the policy that should happen after we approve/disapprove the policy as amended. Ms. Ham asked if the Board accepts the amended policy, why the decision wouldn't go back to staff. Mr. Capello stated that it was because the JLMC asked the Board to decide, and he believed that the Board owes the JLMC some kind of resolution at the Board level.

Mr. Shanahan noted that after the vote on the policy the next thing we can do is to move and discuss the possibility of recommending back to COAST management that this individual go to either a two-year or indefinite or permanent ban. Ms. Doering suggested that the theft in discussion predates this revision and so wouldn't fall under this new policy but, if the Board wanted to approve the new policy, the issue of that individual's ban would still be left as a request to the Board. Ms. Ham noted this should be resolved sooner rather than later. Mr. Williams stated the customer is now three to four months into the year ban so there's no imminent risk of them being allowed back on board. He clarified that the initial concern with a permanent ban was centered around concerns of whether we would for example refuse ADA service to a 70-year-old man because of something he did when he was 25. Mr. Williams noted that having an appeals process in place relieves a lot of that concern because now, if a long-term ban is in place, there's a way to overturn a ban if there's a documentable change for which the burden is on them to prove that. As a result, Mr. Williams suggested that the Board could make a decision for a longer ban given there's now a way to reverse that if there's some reason to do so.

Mr. Shanahan asked if there was any other discussion about the motion to approve the amended policy, further amended to add specificity to the Appeals Process, and pending review by the JLMC. Seeing none, he took the vote by roll call:

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Mr. Capello	Yes

Mr. Dornblut	No vote recorded
Ms. Ham	Yes
Ms. Harris	Yes
Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Yes
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes
Mr. Tovey	Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Shanahan requested a motion for the purposes of discussion or possible decision on the board recommendation for the specific case of the theft of an employee's wallet.

Mr. Capello made a motion that the specific case go back to staff for reconsideration based on the new policy and then make that determination. Mr. Sandmann seconded that motion. Mr. Nichols noted often in cases that go through the legal system, we may get a chance to weigh in on any ban as part of that process.

Mr. Shanahan restated the motion, and Ms. Joyce clarified that staff would then have the opportunity to extend the ban to either a multi-year or lifetime ban, which could be okay now that the appeal opportunity is in the process. Mr. Bogle asked if the staff would prefer to have a directive from the Board about what the ban should be or would they be comfortable making the decision. Mr. Nichols noted that having the Board weigh in would be helpful.

Mr. Capello withdrew his motion, and Mr. Sandmann withdrew his second. Mr. Capello made a new motion that a 2-year suspension be put into place starting the day that the judicial system process is done. Mr. Williams asked for clarification on whether that would be 2 years from the end of any sentence or 2 years from the date of sentencing. Mr. Capello clarified that his motion intended it to be from the date of conviction or disposition in addition to the ban currently in place. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion, restated by Mr. Shanahan, to continue the ban for an additional 2 years starting on the day of the case's disposition from court.

Mr. Bogle asked if staff would be happy with this resolution and Mr. Williams noted that staff had been looking for a permanent ban so they may or may not be happy with this determination but that it is more than the original ban which he felt they would appreciate. Ms. Ham noted that she thought the intent through the discussion last time, and with which she was uncomfortable, was a permanent ban without an appeals process in place. But now that an appeals process is in place, she believes it would be most supportive of staff to permanently ban this individual. Ms. Joyce asked Mr. Capello why he now is looking at 2 year vs. lifetime and he anticipates that it could be several years before the court process wraps up because of the backlog in courts and the less serious nature of this charge.

Mr. Scala noted these kinds of bans are not going to be very frequent and Mr. Williams clarified that we are banning people every week but that most of those bans are for class 1 violations, some of which would now be class 2. A lot of the current bans are for vaping or verbal harassment of other customers or staff. Mr. Scala noted that enforcement is problematic for drivers to keep up with the identification of banned passengers, especially with wearing different items (sunglasses, hats). Mr. Williams noted that with customers who are very known to staff enforcement is much easier, but for customers we don't really know, it can be tough for drivers to recognize them as the person in the photo.

Mr. Shanahan asked if there was any further discussion between a ban of 2 years or an indefinite ban. Mr. Bogle shared that he supported Ms. Ham's point about this not only being a wallet but also an attempt to steal the driver's identity so he would be supportive of an indefinite ban with the opportunity for appeal. Mr. Capello asked Mr. Bogle if that was a friendly amendment, which Mr. Bogle confirmed it was, and Mr.

Capello accepted amending the 2-year ban to a permanent ban. Mr. Lentz seconded the amended motion noting he had forgotten about the attempts to steal the driver's identity.

Mr. Shanahan restated the motion to be a permanent ban for the individual in this case. Mr. Williams wanted to make clear in the motion for the record that, with an appeal, the permanent ban could be overturned; that the board's decision is not final. Mr. Nichols noted he prefers indefinite versus permanent, which fits more with the appeals process. Ms. Hesse-Stromberg asked for clarification on whether we were changing the language in the policy from permanent to indefinite since both were being used. Mr. Shanahan noted we should keep the language as permanent and could consider a change to the policy some other time. Mr. Bogle asked if all Class 3 violations would go to the Board and Mr. Williams noted the policy has staff making all determinations and that this one came to the Board because of a request by staff.

Seeing no further discussion, Mr. Shanahan took the vote by roll call.

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Mr. Capello	Yes
Mr. Dornblut	Yes
Ms. Ham	Yes
Ms. Harris	Yes
Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Yes
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes
Mr. Tovey	Yes

The motion passed unanimously.

Action Item #2: Gillig Bus Purchase Authorization

Mr. Nichols reported that COAST has just been awarded the funding for two (2) additional Gillig buses. In January, the Board approved the purchase of four (4) Gillig buses so these additional two (2) buses would allow COAST to purchase all six (6) buses awarded by the NHDOT. He noted the pricing on these buses is \$599,407 each. The total cost for the procurement with Gillig will be \$1,198,814, which is less than what we had budgeted for so this would be a nice savings over what had been projected. The State will pick up 7.5% of this procurement pending approval of COAST's Capital Plan request which is working through the State budget currently.

Action Requested: *The COAST Board of Directors approve purchase order for two (2) heavy duty Gillig buses for \$1,198,814.*

Mr. Capello made the motion to approve the purchase order for two (2) heavy duty Gillig buses for \$1,198,814. which was seconded by Ms. Joyce.

Mr. Shanahan took the vote by roll call:

Ms. Amaral	Yes
Mr. Bogle	Yes
Mr. Capello	Yes
Mr. Dornblut	Yes
Ms. Ham	Yes
Ms. Harris	Yes

Ms. Joyce	Yes
Mr. Lentz	Yes
Mr. Sandmann	Yes
Mr. Scala	Yes
Mr. Shanahan	Yes
Mr. Tovey	Yes

The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

Discussion Items

Discussion Item #1: SB 297 - HealthTrust

Mr. Nichols shared that COAST is a longstanding member of HealthTrust, the entity through whom we purchase our health, dental, short-term disability, long-term disability, and life insurance. In addition, all of our wellness programs are offered through HealthTrust as well as our Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

He reported that Senate Bill (SB) 297, if passed, would shift the ultimate financial liability for losses to COAST, would require COAST to establish reserve accounts used to pay for assessments and replenishments, and would require COAST to accept changes for a new process and structure not based on commonly accepted, actuarially sound, standards.

In addition, he shared that HealthTrust has announced that, if SB 297 is passed as amended, HealthTrust will cease operations on December 31, 2025.

Mr. Nichols noted that staff is still assessing the potential ramifications of this bill becoming law, but that it certainly appears that this would have significant impacts on COAST's benefit offerings and could potentially increase our costs for these coverages. Mr. Nichols noted that this is a significant concern given COAST saved 25-40% when we joined HealthTrust.

Mr. Shanahan noted that the Barrington Town Administrator, on behalf of the NH Municipal Association (NHMA), is trying to get HealthTrust and the Secretary of State (SOS) together to work on a compromise that is acceptable to both sides and that provides reassurance to SOS that HealthTrust is solvent.

Mr. Dornblut spoke about the negative effect this law would have on NH Municipalities, School Departments, Firemen and Policemen, and Bus Drivers. He stressed that the result is totally detrimental with no benefit to the people of NH. He believes the NH House has no other option but to reject this because it will increase property taxes.

Mr. Shanahan noted that the Dover City Manager wrote a letter to all House members discussing the complete negativity associated with this bill and suggested the COAST Board send a similar letter to the House against this bill. Mr. Capello asked if the governor is in support of this if it gets to her desk. Mr. Dornblut stressed this has been rushed through and that there have been no opportunities for public input. In addition, he noted that there were no red flags raised about HealthTrust and that HealthTrust reports that it is not insolvent.

Mr. Nichols suggested that this is connected to issues going back more than a decade ago. Mr. Shanahan noted that the International Association of Fire Fighters is a big supporter of this bill.

Mr. Shanahan asked members to go back to their organizations to see if they would like to have input into COAST's response to this. Mr. Bogle asked if NHMA has put together a template and Mr. Shanahan said they are working on it. Ms. Ham asked that Mr. Nichols put together talking points. Mr. Dornblut stressed that we have to create a unified and public response to this.

Discussion Items #2 and #3:

Mr. Nichols noted that Discussion Items 2 and 3 are the beginning discussions to address how COAST's funding may not be adequate in the future. These discussion items explore ways to limit COAST's expenses in strategic and thoughtful ways. He noted that workshops outside of the board meeting will be necessary to move these forward.

#2: ADA Evaluator/Travel Trainer Position

Mr. Nichols noted that as we consider how to slow down the spending of FTA grant funds, as well as how to reduce pressures on generating match, we are considering hiring an ADA Evaluator/Travel Trainer to help better manage our ongoing demand for ADA paratransit and other demand response services.

Mr. Williams made a presentation at the meeting noting that ADA services are provided to individuals with disabilities who are unable to ride fixed route services with strict eligibility criteria as these services are not intended to be a broad service to all with disabilities.

Mr. Williams shared that there are 14-15 new ADA-approved riders each month. He noted that it has been very difficult to make determinations off just paperwork and COAST has tended to be more lenient than not given that. He proposed that if we were more intensive on eligibility screening and we provided travel training, we could reduce use of the ADA service. Operating costs per ride (one-way) are \$31.21 (excluding admin costs). Fixed route is cheaper and doesn't require a reservation, however, fixed route is not door-to-door and less assistance is provided by the operator. In this approach, screening would include in-person assessments to see what people are capable of doing and helping determine how they can navigate the system.

Mr. Williams noted that if we changed to this kind of screening, we would need to bring on a part-time person because we do not have the capacity or skills in-house to do intensive screening and travel training. He shared that doing so would pay for itself if enough people were denied eligibility and used our fixed route services instead. He noted that we should anticipate pushbacks as it may appear that we are taking away something if fewer people qualify and that in-depth workshopping would be required to work through the many aspects of such a change.

Ms. Joyce asked if it is cheaper for an individual to ride fixed route? Mr. Williams indicated that the fare to ride fixed route is \$1.50 and ADA is \$3.00. He noted that many people who switched would also be eligible for Half Fare \$0.75 which is not available to them on ADA. Mr. Dornblut suggested that a self-advocate for this position who could provide a first-person point of view might be helpful in making this transition.

Mr. Bogle noted that the \$31.21 ADA per trip does not include Admin costs (cost for admin staff and insurance) and asked if TripLink would be impacted by this? Mr. Nichols stated it would not in any way that would cause a pinch point for them. Mr. Bogle then asked what percentage of our current ADA riders could switch to fixed route? Mr. Williams thinks maybe 15%. Mr. Scala asked how eligibility for ADA services has expanded. Mr. Williams noted that disabilities can be physical limitations, cognitive limitations, and psychological limitations. He added that the physical limitations may not be as significant as people's self-report. Another factor is that the FTA expects conditional eligibility where someone would qualify for some rides but not others. Which means we could deny one trip and allow another trip, but we do not have the capacity to investigate each reservation that way.

Mr. Scala asked if this person would go back and review everyone or would just use this process going forward. Mr. Williams noted that to re-evaluate is a bigger cost savings, but to now deny people who have been receiving the service could cause a lot of upset amongst current riders.

Mr. Shanahan asked about the cost of the new position vs. savings and whether the savings was worth the potential negative impact of making this change. Is it just a leveling off or a savings for the future? Mr. Nichols noted that we may need to bring in partners who work with the populations who would be impacted to explore this further and ensure we are proceeding with the appropriate level of sensitivity.

Mr. Bogle shared that he is supportive of implementing this kind of evaluation for new clients but that he feels it is an equality issue if standards exist for new, but not existing, clients. Mr. Capello shared that his concern is the timing and that this could create negative pushback. Mr. Dornblut suggested conversations with individuals in the independent living community, maybe Granite State Independent Living, might gain us support because we're looking at focusing on people who truly need the service getting it and that these kinds of conversations would allow us to get the lay of the land.

Mr. Nichols noted we're not talking about anything before October 1st and that we are starting to look at FY26 budget. ADA is \$1.5M a year in cost (most expensive by far) and a 15% cost savings would be \$225K/year so it wouldn't take long for it to be a big cost savings.

Mr. Shanahan suggested that staff keep working on it and check in with partners like GSIL and Able NH to make sure we have buy-in. He suggested maybe a Summit to talk through this and shared that he believes the organizations want people to become more and more independent which riding the fixed route would give them. He suggested that perhaps we can collaborate with them to work on selling this for or with us.

Mr. Dornblut believes that adding travel training is a great way to approach this. Mr. Bogle asked if there could be a travel trainer that several organizations could contract with so no single organization bears the cost.

Mr. Williams noted we've had a lot of requests from organizations to train their staff to help them train their customers to use the services.

#3: Potential Service Adjustments

Mr. Nichols noted that, in addition to looking at the ADA Evaluator/Travel Trainer to cut costs, we are beginning to evaluate potential service adjustments that could be considered as we prepare for FY26.

Mr. Williams made a presentation noting that any reductions to fixed route service impacts the municipal funding formula and municipal requests.

He presented three options for consideration:

- Option 1 – end all services at (buses going out of service) 8:01pm (vs. 10:15pm). Mr. Williams noted that this would shift the costs more toward Dover, Somersworth and Rochester.
- Option 2 – eliminate Route 42 altogether. This would mean we could lose Pease's match contribution. Ridership on this route is underperforming. Portions of Pease would still be eligible for ADA services because in bubble of Route 43 (medical facilities on Pease). Mr. Williams noted that we could also make modifications to this (i.e., create a demand response reservation service) but to keep Kittery we'd need to trim some of Route 43 and interline Route 44 with Route 43.
- Option 3 – cut Route 100 to Shipyard which has higher than our average ridership.

Mr. Williams stressed that all Options are independent of each other so we could do any combination of options. These changes couldn't happen any earlier than FY26.

He shared that the only savings associated with these changes would be in fixed route and that ADA savings would be minor, but that this is the lowest hanging fruit we can identify for reducing costs.

Mr. Nichols stressed this is the starting point for discussion to consider how we adjust our system to bring expenses closer to anticipated revenues going forward. If we want to make changes for October 1 we would be going out for public comment in June at the latest. Additional timing would be needed for updating materials and providing 30 days for service reductions public comment. He noted that we would not be required to provide public comment for shutting down earlier in the evening, but that we would for public comment for shutting down earlier in the evening, but that we would for elimination of service. He

shared that COAST does more than is required by the FTA regarding public comment because it is good practice.

Ms. Ham asked if we have a mobility management program, and do they solicit continuous feedback on routes? Mr. Nichols noted that we do that internally, but the Regional Mobility Managers role is always more focused on demand response side of the operation.

Mr. Scala asked what would save us from having to do this? Increase in state funding? Level funding? Mr. Nichols reported that we need increased State and Federal funding (\$1.5M gap now).

Mr. Dornblut suggested we have an obligation to the public that funds us to let them know that we cannot exist without an investment in public transportation, and to be very transparent with our communities and the public. Ms. Ham noted that everyone is doing this now – looking at how to downsize to prepare for a future that is so uncertain.

Mr. Shanahan asked that members please keep these options and the HealthTrust issue in mind.

Committee Reports

The Executive Committee attempted to meet on March 3, but no quorum was present. There was a discussion on the potential avenues the organization could take if the government had shut down on March 14th.

VII. Community Updates/Information Items

Ridership

Mr. Nichols noted that February was one of our coldest and snowiest winter months in some time. Overall ridership was down 9.8% from January and down 3% from February of 2024. Fixed route ridership was down 9.9% from January and 3% from February 2024 but YTD ridership is up a strong 13.4% over FY24. Demand response ridership was down 9.1% from January and 2.6% from February of 2024 and YTD ridership is essentially even.

VIII. Adjournment

The next Board Meeting will be on April 23, 2025. Mr. Shanahan adjourned the meeting after a motion from Mr. Capello that was seconded by Mr. Lentz. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 10:34am.

Respectfully submitted by Ms. Joyce, Secretar