



**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
DRAFT Minutes of the Board of Directors
Wednesday, June 25, 2025**

Present: Scott Bogle, Arthur Capello, Sean Clancy, Jason Garnham (Town of Kittery nominee), Denis Hebert, Margaret Joyce, Colin Lentz, Joann Neumann, Michael Scala, Dennis Shanahan

Absent: Fred Butler, Sönke Dornblut, Emily Ham, Jillian Harris, Michael Mates, Dave Sandmann, David Tovey, Crystal Paradis-Catanzaro

Staff: Michael Williams, Margot Doering, Heather Hesse-Stromberg, Jeff Donald, Angel Cortes, Phil Smith, Keith Dusinlleux

I. CALL TO ORDER

Following a ride to 42 Sumner Drive on the outbound Route 34 bus by several members of the board, and a tour of the 42 Sumner Drive facility led by Mr. Williams, the meeting was called to order by Chair Shanahan at 9:11 am with a quorum present.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Hebert made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 28, 2025 board meeting which was seconded by Ms. Neumann. There were no comments, questions, or revisions.

The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

COAST recognized the 10-year anniversaries of employees Gib Hearn and Don Carpenter.

IV. FINANCIALS

Ms. Doering reported on the financial results through May 31, 2025. For the month of May, Ms. Doering noted the large amount of Other Income. The total amount included \$50,000 of grant revenue from NH Charitable Foundation. Insurance for the month increased as new vehicles and bus shelters were added to our policy coverage. The results year to date, show revenues 4.3% behind budget, primarily in Federal Assistance. Expenses are running 7.3% behind budget with the greatest underspending in the Maintenance area and TMA activities. The first being subject to numerous variables while the second being due to the delay in hiring for that position. Of note, the grant that will fund this position is under review by the FTA.

V. Old Business

The Board Package included updates on NH Gives, SB 297 (HealthTrust), NHTA/SCC Annual Conference, staff meetings with two local employers, and a new COAST Promotional Video. Ms. Joyce asked how the NH Gives compared to last year. Ms. Doering shared that the results were slightly lower. There were no other questions asked by Board Members regarding these updates.

VI. New Business

Action Items

Action Item #1: Fabulous Find Resale Boutique Donation Application

The Fabulous Find Resale Boutique in Kittery supports area nonprofits through the sharing of their profits during a one-month period. It has been a very successful opportunity to partner and currently has over a year to wait for nonprofits to participate.

They ask that we promote the Boutique as a part of our participation. We offer to do so via our newsletter, social media platforms, in-bus posters, and a press release.

Their application requires that we have the full knowledge and consent of the board of directors at the time of application.

Action Required: *The COAST Board of Directors approve the submittal of an application for donation to the Fabulous Find Resale Boutique.*

Ms. Neumann made a motion to approve submitting an application for donation to Fabulous Find. Seconded by Ms. Joyce. Ms. Joyce spoke highly of the organization and how it has benefited the local non-profits of over \$1,000,000 since inception.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

Discussion Items

Discussion Item #1: Overview of Organization & Explanation of Roles

(Mr. Capello departed at 9:28 and Mr. Clancy departed at 9:45)

Ms. Hesse-Stromberg presented an overview of the organization chart with a brief description of her role in the organization. She then explained the roles of Vanessa Polychronis and Janice Outhuse. Ms. Doering and Mr. Williams gave descriptions of their responsibilities.

Staff members Phil Smith, Angel Cortes, Keith Dusingleux and Jeff Donald gave presentations on their roles as Head of Maintenance, Supervisor, Dispatcher and Regional Mobility Manager, respectively.

Discussion Item #2: Update on Future Facility design

All comments submitted on the design at the 90% level have been submitted to the design team. We continue to meet weekly with the team to raise any questions and hear about progress. Deliverables at this point include:

- A. Civil, Structural, Architectural, Mechanical, Electrical, Plumbing, and HVAC plans signed and sealed by a Professional Engineer or Architect. A final owner's review will occur first.
- B. Technical Specifications
- C. Opinion of Probable Cost
- D. Operating Cost Estimate
- E. Facility Maintenance Schedule, including maintenance costs
- F. Contract Documents
- G. Bid Documents

Given where we are currently with fundraising, we are pausing bid phase services until such time as we feel comfortable moving forward with that phase of the project.

We continue to work on interior design with Office Interiors. The previous Friday was the intended completion date for final design, however, there has been some slippage of the schedule. We are awaiting an update to the schedule from the Project Manager. We are no longer under pressure of a fall bid schedule, however.

Questions were asked about whether the grants or permits have expiration dates that would be affected by pushing out the RFQ and construction timeframe. Permits have various expiration dates and can be extended. Mr. Hebert asked why the RFQ process has to be delayed. He also asked if the space planned in the new building is sufficient, how many people work remotely, and how this might affect the size of the building. Mr. Hebert asked more questions about the current plans, particularly regarding the use of energy for heating the facility.

Discussion Item #3: Update on Connected by COAST Fundraising Campaign

Connected by Coast is a campaign to raise \$7 million to support the future of public transportation and the economic, social, and environmental benefits it generates. The campaign celebrates COAST's 40+ years of connecting people and communities in the Greater Seacoast region of New Hampshire and southern Maine and will lay the foundation for the next 40+ years.

The campaign has three major components:

Capital – Advancing a state-of-the-art facility	\$4,000,000
Annual – Strengthening our financial base	\$1,000,000
Endowment – Ensuring a future of opportunity	\$2,000,000

Our main push in the campaign has thus far been in the capital opportunity. However, if donors are interested in supporting the annual or endowment opportunities, we will happily discuss those with them.

We have held three very well received Learn & Engage events in Dover, Rochester, & Portsmouth with the Cities and Chambers of Commerce. They have all allowed us to add to a potential donors list we continue to build. The building of this list is critical to our success of the overall campaign. This year, to date we have raised \$104,700 for the new facility. In total we have raised \$283,700 of private donations and \$13,760,000 of Federal funds for the estimated \$17.3M project.

Our next steps are to consider further events, intimate and potentially larger, as we try to reach more potential donors. Ideas include another intimate event in Portsmouth, ideally with a developer and real estate focus. We have also begun discussing how we can turn our annual meeting into an opportunity to be a fundraising event, and/or hold a larger event, potentially partnering with a larger donor.

Key to being able to manage all this effort will be the near-term hiring of our new Director of Development. The position opening went live on June 19th on the websites of COAST, the NH Center for Nonprofits, the Association for Fundraising Professionals (N.E.) and Indeed. It was also posted on LinkedIn.

Committee Reports

No meetings to report.

VII. Community Updates/Information Items

Ridership

- Overall ridership in May totaled 34,975. This was down 2.6% from April, and up 7.3% over May 2024.
- Fixed route ridership totalled 32,551, down 2.4% from April, and up by 7.1% over May 2024. YTD fixed route ridership is now up 13.8% over FY24 and is 95% of our FY19 (pre-pandemic) levels.
- Demand response ridership totalled 2,424 for the month. This represented a 5.6% decrease from April, and a 10.0% increase over ridership in May 2024. YTD ridership is 5.8% over FY24 and is 107% of our FY19 (pre-pandemic) levels. Amongst the various demand response services we operate YTD ridership compares to FY24 as follows: ADA +2.1%, Rte 70D +30.1%, PST +10.9%, Comm. Rides -6.0%, and Accessible VDP trips +635.7%

We did not have a sponsor for Fare Free Saturday in June.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Lentz moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Hebert. Mr. Shanahan adjourned the meeting at 10:22 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Ms. Joyce, Secretary