



**COOPERATIVE ALLIANCE FOR SEACOAST TRANSPORTATION  
Draft Minutes of the Board of Directors  
Wednesday, September 23, 2015**

**Present:** Scott Bogle, Dan Chartrand, Cynthia Copeland, Jen Decker, Steve Fournier, Colin Lentz, Kenn Ortmann, Donna Pohli, Dave Sandmann, Cliff Sinnott, John Stohl, Maria Stowell, Juliet Walker

**Staff Present:** Brian Deguzis, Jeff Donald, Heather Hesse-Stromberg, Deidra Howard, Rad Nichols, Anne Rugg

At 8:30 am all present introduced themselves and Chairman Ortmann made introductory remarks noting how lucky we are to participate in the beginning stages of the political process in NH. He urged those in attendance to take advantage of the opportunities to see candidates and to ask questions regarding public transportation. Mr. Ortmann thanked staff for their hard work in providing such good customer service and responding to the many demands on COAST as it expands in size.

Mr. Nichols welcomed everyone and reflected on FY2015. Mr. Nichols noted that we have many new staff in management positions, that there is a steep learning curve in this industry. He noted that there have been many transitions in Operations that will put us in a good position going forward.

Mr. Nichols noted that, as an organization, our focus must shift to strategic planning because what lies ahead is what drives what we should be doing now.

Mr. Nichols noted that COAST has a great staff that is dedicated and working to meet new requirements and new expectations. He reported that staff is very excited to engage with the Board on Strategic Planning.

Mr. Ortmann noted that the benefit of Strategic Planning is the chance to define the why of what we're doing so our focus remains the same no matter what factors change moving forward.

***Guest Speaker on Strategic Planning made a scheduling error and was unable to attend so the Business Meeting was started.***

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 8:57am.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Sandmann made a motion to accept the August 26, 2015 minutes as presented. Mr. Fournier seconded the motion and all voted in favor. Mr. Ortmann thanked Ms. Walker for chairing the meeting.

### **III. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **IV. Financial Report • July 2015 Income Statement & Balance Sheet**

Mr. Nichols reported that there has not been much change month to month and that we continue to be under budget. Revenues continue to be stronger than expected. Advertising revenue continues to be under projections but is improving each month. Expenses are running significantly under budget as are wages and benefits. COAST has benefitted from lower fuel and materials prices as well. Miscellaneous expenses are up because they include rental of our office space at 6 Sumner Drive and equipment and materials for that space. Mr. Sandmann moved to accept the financial report as presented, which was seconded by Mr. Fournier and all voted in favor.

### **V. Old Business**

#### Route 1 Ridership Performance

Since implementing the additional \$0.50 fee on passengers boarding in Somersworth due to the City's underfunding of COAST, weekday ridership on Route 1 has experienced a notable drop through 9/15.

WD avg.	225.6 (31 service days)
Prev. 3 month avg.	274.8 (-17.9%)
Prev. 6 month avg.	266.3 (-15.3%)
Aug-14 WD avg.	253.3 (-10.9%)

Avg. Saturday ridership since August 1 was also down.

Sat. avg.	147.6 (7 service days)
Prev. 3 month avg.	160.0 (-7.8%)
Prev. 6 month avg.	157.1 (-6.0%)
Aug-14 avg.	171.6 (-14.0%)

#### Pease B2B Commuter Challenge

The second year now for this event coordinated by Anne Rugg as part of commuteSMARTseacoast's outreach activities, the 2015 Pease Commuter Challenge is happening September 14-25. Ms. Rugg reported that people continue to sign up

and that there are 60 more people participating this year. She noted that the challenge is intended to encourage people to change their behavior. She also reported that 80% of people who signed up had never done smart commuting before and that surveys show people who try it like it. She noted that people are very excited to participate and that it is a tightly contested race. Mr. Nichols indicated that Ms. Rugg is working with the Shipyard to potentially bring a challenge there. Ms. Copeland noted that her award winning organization had a wonderful time during the last challenge.

## **VI. New Business**

### **Action Items**

#### **Action Item #1: Election of Officers for 2015**

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of officers at the August 26<sup>th</sup> meeting:

Chair – Kenneth Ortmann (City of Rochester)  
Vice-Chair – Juliet T.H. Walker (City of Portsmouth)  
Secretary/Treasurer – Jennifer Decker (Granite State Independent Living)

Executive Committee:

Per the By-Laws, the Executive Committee automatically consists of: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, Past-Chair and one member to be appointed by the Chair. Mr. Ortmann noted that anyone interested in/willing to participate on the Executive Committee should contact him. Mr. Nichols sits on the Executive Committee as a non-voting member.

**Action Required:** *That the Board of Directors elect the FY2016 Board of Directors and direct the Chairman to take steps to fill the available Executive Committee seat.*

Mr. Fournier made a motion to accept the slate of officers and to direct the Chairman to take steps to fill the available Executive Committee seat. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sandmann and all voted in favor.

#### **Action Item #2: FY16 Board Meeting Calendar**

Mr. Nichols presented the draft FY2016 Board meeting schedule. With a few exceptions (noted with an '\*'), the schedule follows the previously agreed upon schedule of the fourth Wednesday of every month at 8:30am. Meetings will be held in Rm 305 of the McConnell Center in Dover, NH.

October 28, 2015

November 18, 2015 \*

December 16, 2015 \*

January 27, 2016

February 24, 2016

March 23, 2016

April 20, 2016

May 25, 2016

June 22, 2016

July 27, 2016

August 24, 2016

September 28, 2016

The meetings in November and December will have to be held at an alternative location due to the room already being booked.

**Action Required:** *That the Board of Directors review and approve the FY16 meeting calendar.*

Mr. Bogle made a motion to accept the FY16 Meeting Calendar. The motion was seconded by Mr. Sandmann and all voted in favor.

### **Action Item #3: Draft FY16 Operating Budget**

Mr. Nichols presented the Draft FY16 operating budget in detail.

Last December and January, when preparing the municipal funding requests to support our projected FY16 budget, we had estimated an overall operating budget (exclusive of coordination and TMA activities) of \$4.6-\$4.9M.

The additional experience in the intervening months allowed us to draft a more refined FY16 operating budget over the course of the summer.

#### Overall Summary:

- All FY16 projects are being made based on FY15 actuals through May 2015.
- Total operating budget is projected to be \$5,516,832.
- Represents an overall increase in the operating budget of \$82,770.
- Budget does not propose having to utilize cash reserves.

#### Considerations:

1. Adjusted for a full year of new, significantly higher liability insurance rates.

2. Budgeted an increase in pay rates to more competitive levels for operators & utility cleaners within their first two years at COAST.
3. Incorporated an additional full-time mechanic.
4. Includes the lease for 6 Sumner Drive and associated new operating costs.
5. Overall fixed-route service miles and hours are projected to be marginally lower.
6. Have projected a 12.5% growth rate in the ADA program.
7. Projecting an overall combined increase in fares collected of 2.5% (\$18K).
8. Expecting that 95% of necessary municipal funds will be collected.
9. Projecting a 15.5% increase in the TMA program and a 14.8% reduction in the Coordination program.

**Action Required:** *That the Board of Directors review, discuss and approve the FY16 Operating Budget.*

Ms. Copeland noted that insurance being 6% of the budget is very significant and that much of what determines the budget is outside our control. She asked about the increase in our miscellaneous expenses and Mr. Nichols noted that this includes the rent and expenses of our 6 Sumner Drive facility.

Mr. Stohl made a motion to adopt the FY16 Operating Budget as presented and Mr. Bogle seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

## **VII. Information Items**

### Federal Funding Reauthorization

Mr. Nichols noted that there will likely be no reauthorization of federal surface transportation funds prior to 2017. Expect the “kicking of the can down the increasingly deteriorating road” to continue.

From Politico’s *Morning Transportation* report (9/17/15) – The Countdown: Highway and transit policy expires in 43 days. DOT appropriations run out and the FAA reauthorization expires in 14 days. The 2016 presidential election is in 417 days.

### Ridership

Despite a tremendously challenging winter, select reductions in overall service levels, and the recent imposition of an additional fare in Somersworth, FY15 ridership is projected to be within a percentage point of our FY14 levels.

Charts were included in the Board packet.

### GACIT Hearing

There is a GACIT hearing scheduled for 9/29 in Hampton at the Sea Shell at 7:00pm. All are welcome.

There was a motion to adjourn made at 9:50 by Mr. Chartrand, seconded by Ms. Decker. All voted in favor.