



**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
Minutes of the Board of Directors
Wednesday, October 23, 2013**

Members Present: Scott Bogle – Chairman, Kenn Ortmann – Vice Chairman, Cynthia Copeland, Jen Decker, Tom Morgan (arr. 8:50 AM), Martin Pepin, Dave Sandmann, Rick Taintor, Juliet Walker

COAST Staff Present: Rad Nichols, Jenn Hastings, Brian Deguzis, Jeff Donald

I. Call to Order

Mr. Bogle called the meeting to order at 8:44 AM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Sandmann made the motion to approve the minutes of the September 25, 2013 meeting. Mr. Pepin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Public Comment

Mr. Nichols said that he had attended four GACIT hearings, and will provide written comment in the next week. Mr. Bogle said that Mr. Nichols did a good job explaining the COAST issues and the broader funding issues. Councilor Sununu seemed pleased to hear that the Clipper Connection has such a high farebox recovery ratio.

IV. Financial Report

August 2013 Income Statement and Balance Sheets

Mr. Nichols said that he spoke with Bob Ruzinsky about the timing of our financial reports after the Board discussion in September. Assuming we have the accounts receivable, accounts payable and statistics ready in time, we should be able to get the reports done two weeks earlier, which is right in the middle of our meeting schedule. We could provide some estimates, but making adjustments later would require additional work.

Wages and fringes are up a little due to high numbers of employees taking vacations in the summer months. The materials and supplies line is high due to an extra fuel drop in August. We have added a new line of operations expenses for the TMA. Our income statement shows a gain of \$106k. We do not see much change on the balance sheet. Our accounts receivable were higher at the end of August, and we have a growing available funds balance. We expect to see no surprises in September as we wrap up the fiscal year.

V. Old Business

Transportation Management Association (TMA) Update

Mr. Nichols said that Ms. Rugg has been immersing herself in all things TMA. She attended three recent tabling events at Pease. She is currently working on developing a website for the TMA, which will now be called commuteSmart seacoast. Two new members have joined the TMA Advisory Committee, one from Bottomline Technologies and one from Lonza. She also recently had the opportunity to shadow a TMA manager in Boston.

Mr. Ortmann asked about the emergency ride home program, which is on hold. Mr. Nichols explained that the emergency ride home program is currently available only to Clipper Connection passholders. We expect to expand that program to include rideshare commuters, but we will need to contract that work out. For example, taxi companies that meet COAST service standards would be able to do the work.

Initial Fare and Service Change Impacts

Mr. Nichols said that we estimated a 20% drop in ridership on the routes that went from a 50 cent fare to a \$1.50 fare. The ridership drop so far on the trolley has been only 15%. The drop on Route 33 has been 21%, but service was also cut back on that route. Projections thus far have been close to the experience.

ACT Coordination Update

Mr. Nichols said that ACT is holding a strategic planning session next Wednesday from 12 PM to 4 PM. ACT is bringing in a facilitator to help them re-assess the group's purpose and vision. COAST Board members are welcome to attend.

VI. New Business

Presentation: Complete Streets

Ms. Walker and Mr. Taintor gave a presentation about Complete Streets. Complete Streets recognizes that streets are not just for cars—they are essential public spaces. Communities with a Complete Streets program tend to have narrower streets, shorter blocks, and a higher quality pedestrian experience. Communities with greater populations of people walking, biking and using transit have lower obesity rates, making this a public health issue. A Complete Streets statement was added to the City of Portsmouth's 2005 master plan update and its site plan review regulations. After providing an overview of Complete Streets, Mr. Taintor reviewed some recent projects in Portsmouth, including the State Street makeover, the Islington Street study, the Maplewood Avenue road diet, and the Market Street gateway.

Discussion Items

Draft Capital Plan

Mr. Nichols presented a proposed updated capital plan. It includes projected plans for a facility study, replacement of vehicles (currently we have a fleet of 36), equipment, and on-street amenities. It was noted that in some cases COAST has been successful at extending the life of equipment beyond the FTA's life cycle.

Of note, we need to engage consultants to help COAST with a facilities master plan so we can determine how best to meet our growing needs on our site. We would expect such a facility to

cost at least \$5 million.

Mr. Ortmann suggested that we discuss the parameters of a facility master plan at a future Board meeting, so we will be ready to go if and when funding becomes available.

Holiday Service Expansions

This year the Vintage Christmas Trolley will return to its former routing, now that the new Memorial Bridge is open. The trolley will run during the first three weekends of December. We are also planning to run enhanced Saturday Route 2 service during the holiday season and weekday-level service on the last Saturday before Christmas. We have done this in the past, and it has been well-received. We typically shut down around 8 PM on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve so our staff can enjoy the holidays with their families.

Action Items

Advertising Policy Update

Mr. Nichols said that he would not be presenting the policy for approval today, given additional feedback we just received from our attorneys. He has a meeting tomorrow with Alternate Transit Advertising to discuss the process for ad design approval and any other issues they may wish to discuss regarding the updated policy. It is important to strengthen our advertising policy so it clearly states what is acceptable and not acceptable. We looked to similar policies from Seattle and King County, both recently updated, as models for this update.

There was general discussion regarding the ability to restrict advertising and why it had been so long since the last update. Staff was directed to press our attorney for further feedback, recommendations and supporting documentation for their opinion.

Property Liability and Maine Workers' Compensation Insurance Renewal

Mr. Nichols said that our estimated 2013-14 renewal premium is less than the previous year.

He noted that our New Hampshire workers' compensation coverage, not part of this renewal package, is through Property Liability Trust.

Mr. Morgan made the motion to approve the proposed contract with Cross Insurance for a price not to exceed \$120,040, and Mr. Pepin seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Free Rides for US Military Personnel on Veterans' Day

Mr. Nichols said that Mr. Donald has spearheaded this effort by encouraging COAST provide veterans with free rides to the Seacoast Veterans Conference. We would like to extend this opportunity on Veterans' Day, to thank veterans for all they have done. Mr. Sandmann made the motion to approve free rides for military personnel on Veterans' Day, and Mr. Sandmann seconded. Mr. Morgan asked how military personnel would know about the opportunity to ride free. Mr. Nichols said that we would put out a press release and make announcements on our website and social media pages. We would also notify the offices of Senator Shaheen and Congresswoman Shea-Porter. Mr. Ortmann encouraged us to reach out to the American Legions and other fraternal organizations in the area. The motion passed unanimously.

VII. Information Items

Mr. Nichols gave an update on on-line pass sales, stating that just recently there has been a flurry of orders for Shipyard passes due to the federal government's transition to debit cards for their commuting benefit program and delays related to the government shutdown. We have also sold a number of regular COAST monthly passes online. Overall there have been very few issues. We are looking into expanding our online offerings to include ADA ticket books, drop tickets, and 15-ride punchtickets. Ms. Decker asked about the timeline. Mr. Nichols said that he hoped the ADA ticket books could be online within the next month.

Ridership will not surpass FY 2012's total ridership, but it will be close. Ms. Walker said it would be helpful to see trolley ridership broken out into Route 40 and Route 41. Mr. Nichols distributed some ridership charts showing the growth since 2000.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Morgan made the motion to adjourn, and Mr. Pepin seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 10:20 AM.