



**Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation
Minutes of the Board of Directors
December 14, 2016**

Present: Donna Benton, Jennifer Decker, Steve Fournier, Colin Lentz (Alt.), Marty Pepin, Dave Sandmann, Juliet Walker (arr. 8:45), Shelly Winters

Absent: Scott Bogle, Daniel Chartrand, Cynthia Copeland (Alt. present), Daniel Fitzpatrick, Denis Hebert, John Stoll, Maria Stowell

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

I. Call To Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 AM.

II. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Pepin made a motion to accept the October 26, 2016 minutes as presented and Mr. Fournier seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

III. Public Comment

Mr. Nichols noted there was no public comment.

IV. Financial Report – September and October 2016 Income Statement and Balance Sheet

Mr. Nichols noted that FY2016 ended ahead by \$8,500. Mr. Nichols reported that farebox revenue and advertising revenues were increasing and that interest and other income reflected the Portsmouth summer shuttle which was very successful. He also noted that we are under budget for both TMA and Coordination. Coordination's budget is impacted by limited partner involvement. Mr. Nichols reported that we are still one mechanic down and we are struggling to find candidates in this job market. Mr. Nichols informed members that Clipper Connection ridership has continued to decline and that it is lower than it has been in the past and lower than projected. While wages and vacancies led to our being under budget, the new wages and medical insurance costs will hit in January.

V. Old Business

UNH ADA Paratransit

Mr. Nichols reported that UNH has advised COAST that they intend to operate their mandated complementary paratransit service in-house. COAST and UNH intend to meet after the New Year to discuss overlapping service areas and consistency among eligibility applications/processes.

Whittier Street Bridge

The Whittier Street Bridge closed on November 28, 2016. To minimize service impacts COAST's has re-routed Route 1 to use Sixth St., Grove St. and 4th St. in both directions. Because the nearest bus stop on 4th and Washington requires people to walk approximately 0.3 mi. boarding at that stop is free.

VI. New Business

ACTION ITEMS:

Action Item #1: Proposed Drop Ticket Policy

COAST's Single Ride Drop tickets substitute for paying cash fare. Currently they are sold to local non-profit organizations at a 50% discount off the cash value (\$1.50 roundtrip versus \$3.00). These are currently donated to emergency homeless shelters with no limit in place. Without a policy there is the potential for problems regarding the quantity of and frequency with which these Drop Tickets are distributed.

Action Required: *That the Board of Directors consider and select an option and adopt a new Drop Ticket Policy.*

The proposed policy was as follows: *Organizations providing EMERGENCY shelter within the COAST service area may request up to 500 donated Drop Tickets within one calendar year. After the maximum total of free tickets has been reached, Emergency Shelters may purchase Drop Tickets at a 75%-off discounted price.*

Mr. Fournier raised the issue of Municipal Welfare Departments being the first point of contact for many of those needing help and noted that communities who support COAST should get 500 free drop tickets as well.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to adopt the proposed policy including welfare departments. Mr. Lentz seconded the motion for discussion. There were concerns raised about not knowing the municipalities' current use. Additional discussion included what the cap should be and what the subsequent discount should be. Mr. Fournier made a motion to withdraw his previous motion and Mr. Sandmann seconded.

Mr. Fournier made the following motion, *Organizations providing EMERGENCY shelter, as well as municipal welfare/emergency services departments, within the COAST service area may request 500 donated Drop Tickets within one calendar year. After the maximum total of free tickets has been reached, Emergency Shelters and municipal welfare/emergency services departments may purchase Drop Tickets at a 75%-off discounted price.* Mr. Lentz seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Ms. Benton suggested putting a sku on Drop Tickets to track where they are going and who is using them. Mr. Williams indicated that staff will explore printing Drop Tickets in this way.

Action Item #2: Proposed Training Pass Policy

COAST currently distributes free Training Passes to individuals with disabilities (and their trainers) who are learning to ride the bus and navigate the public transit system. Passes may only be used by the person to whom they are issued, and expire six months after the day they are issued. Ms. Polychronis noted that in the time we've been tracking these passes there have been repeated free training passes requested by students/participants.

COAST proposes changes the practice to the following:

- Provide free Training Passes to Trainers employed by, or volunteering for, a registered tax-exempt organization (nonprofit, government, etc.) that provides transit training programs to their clients and/or students with physical, mental, or cognitive disabilities.
- Provide free training passes when requested by email by a valid tax-exempt organization.
- Provide renewed free Training Passes to Trainers.

- Students/participants of a travel training program must have a valid form of purchased COAST fare media each time they board the bus.

Action Required: *That the Board of Directors approve the changes as presented to the Training Pass Policy.*

Mr. Sandmann made a motion to approve the changes as presented. Mr. Fournier seconded. Ms. Decker expressed concerns about participation in the program if students are expected to pay. In addition, Ms. Decker noted that it may take more than one training for students to learn how to use the bus. Mr. Sandmann noted that COAST generously donates the pass but that, at some point, they need to pay for their riders. Mr. Sandmann wondered about a cap on free Training passes and how we would determine that. Ms. Decker noted that everyone learns differently so determining a cap would be challenging. Mr. Sandmann suggested a 2-month Free Training Pass for the student/trainee then students/trainees would have to purchase fare media. Several members agreed. Mr. Sandmann revised his motion to adopt the policy including the one-time Free Training Pass for students for 2 months. Mr. Fournier seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

Action Item #3: Proposed Revision of the Policy on Prohibited Drug Use & Alcohol Misuse

Mr. Williams presented the proposed revised Policy on Prohibited Drug Use & Alcohol Misuse and noted the following changes:

- COAST would consider any blood alcohol concentration between 0.02-0.039 as a positive test and would result in the employee's immediate termination. The FTA allows transit systems to choose whether that range is considered positive.
- Additional non-DOT mandated drug and alcohol testing would be put into place to test for additional drugs commonly abused in our area. These tests would occur as part of pre-employment testing and post-accident in some cases.

Action Required: *That the Board of Directors approve the proposed revision of the Policy on Prohibited Drug Use and Alcohol Misuse for a December 15, 2016 implementation.*

Mr. Fournier made a motion to accept the proposed revision of the Policy and Mr. Sandmann seconded. All voted in favor.

Action Item #4: Proposed Reasonable Modification Policy

Mr. Nichols presented the Proposed COAST Reasonable Modification Policy and Procedure which assures that COAST will make reasonable modifications/accommodations to policies, practices and procedures to avoid discrimination and to ensure that its programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Action Required: That the Board of Directors approve and adopt the Reasonable Modification Policy.

Mr. Fournier made a motion to accept the Reasonable Modification Policy and Mr. Sandmann seconded. All voted in favor.

DISCUSSION ITEMS:

Discussion Item #1: Municipal Funding Formula Committee Update

The Municipal Funding Formula Committee consisted of Mr. Fournier, Mr. Lentz, Mr. Bogle, Mr. Capello of Farmington, Mr. Parker of Dover, Ms. Coleman Puff of Portsmouth and Mr. Dumont of Somersworth.

The Committee reviewed several options for how to more equitably determine municipal contributions. The consensus was to proceed with a preferred option that weighted fixed-route and demand-response weekly service miles and ridership in proportion to the actual costs of these two services in each community. In addition, the Committee suggested a minimum contribution of \$20,000 for each community and that contributions consider including our annual capital needs.

Board members discussed that these requests will be difficult for some communities to meet. There was additional discussion about how to phase in capital costs.

Discussion Item #2: Board Development Committee Update

The Board Development Committee met on 11/30 and consisted of Mr. Sandmann, Mr. Pepin and Ms. Benton. Topics discussed included Board attendance, proposed By-Law changes, improving the Board Orientation process, adding education sessions to meetings, expanding Board membership and Executive Committee membership. The Committee is eager to increase board attendance and participation at meetings. The minutes from the Board Development Committee meeting will be distributed.

VII. Community Updates/Information Items:

Annual Audit

Auditors were on-site from November 28- December 1, 2016 for our annual audit. All went smoothly and the auditors seemed very pleased with what they reviewed upon their departure.

Strategic Plan

COAST is releasing our finalized FY17-19 Strategic Plan. This will be a guiding document for the organization over the next one to three years. Staff with email will be adding COAST's mission to their email signatures. It was suggested that the mission be added to Board Meeting Agendas as well.

Ridership & Performance Information

Ridership and Performance Information was provided at the meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Fournier made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Sandmann seconded. All voted in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40am.