

MAINE TRANSIT ASSOCIATION



Minutes of Wednesday, June 20, 2024 via Zoom

Members Present:

Tom Reinauer, YCCAC, President
Erin Binghalib, Vice President; Kirk Bellavance, KVCAP
Chad Heid, BSOOB Transit, Treasurer
Mike Tremblay, Greater Portland Metro, Clerk
Sandy Buchanan, WMTA
Jack DeBeradinis, RTP
Andrew Clark, GPCOG
Marsha Bennett, WMTS
Stephanie Farrar, PenquisCAP
Terry Bickford, Downeast Community Partners
Laurie Linscott, City of Bangor
Stephanie Carver, Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission

Others Present: Ryan Neale, MaineDOT; Rick Szilagyi, Lexian Management; Allie Phillips, ERG, Tammy Tewhey, Karl Reinhardt, Cambridge Systematics;

1. Call to Order/Introductions:

Vice President Tom Reinauer called the meeting to order at 9:03am.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes:

Moved by Stephanie Carver, seconded by Erin Binghalib, and approved of those present.

3. MaineDOT Updates

Ryan Neale provided the following updates:

Low/No Emission Grant: Announcement expected on awards by July 9

Lewiston/Auburn to Portland Commuter Service: Intent is to have service running ASAP, mid-July a target. Coordination meetings with local agencies to follow.

Chad: Could you provide a summary of the proposals received, and the factors that led to the current consultant? What level of service (hours, FTE's, buses) can be expected?

Ryan: 3 total coach buses (26 seats); 2 in operation and a spare. Proposals were scored based on the ability to provide the service as described and when service would be able to be launched.

4. Presentation/discussion with MaineDOT staff on FY 25 state funding

Tom Reinauer introduced the state funding allocation chart that MaineDOT prepared for the MTA's review, including some overview of the methodology discussed in the allocation letter. Ryan notes that the new numbers apply to the rural side only. Chad Heid notes that the additional funding is a one-off deal and that additional state funding would need to be negotiated with MaineDOT or allocated through the Legislature. Chad discussed the importance of putting together a joint proposal for the ~\$2-million in "set-aside" project funding.

5. Expanding Association Capacity

Chad reviewed the identified need for a website. Chad discusses that this will be our portal for information exchange, event information, new opportunities for revenue, etc. A motion was made by Tom Reinauer, seconded by Erin Bingham, and approved unanimously, for an Essential Under 50 web hosting program. This authorizes a \$935 setup fee and \$72 per month fee to activate our website.

6. Financial Update

Chad Heid discussed that we are in great shape financially and that nearly all agencies have paid their dues. We'll have additional financial obligations with the website we just approved. Chad discussed that the Samoset Resort in Rockland, Maine would be the site of the Tri-State conference (*note: this is no longer the case as of August 2024; see future meeting discussion for more details*). Chad discussed the financial obligations of the conference, including a \$10,000 deposit. We also finalized several other invoices since our last meeting.

7. Public Transit Advisory Committee (PTAC) update

Chad Heid discussed the meeting held earlier in June, where there is a goal to file a biennial report, due in March of 2025, to express a series of recommendations towards form, function, policy, and other activities that will affirm or make recommendations to the strategies we're taking in Maine. We have set up several committees to break up this work into manageable levels. Chad encouraged all MTA members who also serve on the PTAC to engage with one or more PTAC committees. Chad also noted that each region will provide an update on the state of transit in each region, noting that Region 6 and Region 8 have already presented.

8. 2025 Tri-State Transit Conference

Tom Reinauer provided an update on the Tri-State conference for 2025. The Samoset Resort in Rockland was selected (*note that this is no longer the case as of August 2024*). A \$10,000 deposit is required, but we are trying to negotiate that down to \$5,000. The tri-state planning group will meet again on Monday, June 25 to discuss more items. Will be reaching out to New Hampshire and Vermont for money to help with the conference. Next step will be to determine a date for the conference.

9. Medium- and Large-vehicle Clean Transportation Roadmap (ERG)

Allie Phillips from ERG and her team joined the meeting to discuss putting together a clean transportation roadmap for medium and heavy vehicles in Maine. Allie provided background, and MTA members discussed barriers and opportunities toward implementing clean vehicles in transit in Maine.

10. Information Sharing

Mike Tremblay provided an update on the potential merger of South Portland Bus Service with Greater Portland Metro. A workshop will be held next week, with more potential meetings later this summer. Also, Metro is honing in on a new Executive Director, likely to be finalized this summer.

11. Upcoming Membership Meeting: August 21, 2024 at 9:00am

Meeting Adjourned at 11:02 am: No Motion needed