



Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit Committee

**Meeting Minutes**

**August 27, 2020**

*Meeting held by Video Conference*

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/462398981>

4:00 PM

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Greg Tansley called the meeting to order at 4:00 PM.
2. **Members present on video/ call:** Greg Tansley, Alan Minthorn, Louise Reid, Bette Brunswick, Curt Koehler, Jessa Berna, Doris Ortiz, Kenny Blow.

Staff: Tony Scavuzzo, Craig Pendleton, Anne Austin, Tammy Devine, Perian Carpenter.

3. **Public Comment** - No public comment at this time.
4. **Approval of the Meeting Minutes** -

**Motion by Louise Reid to approve the July 23, 2020 Meeting Minutes. Seconded by Alan Minthorn. No comments, questions or discussion. Vote by roll call. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.**

5. **Financial Report** – Tony Scavuzzo, Executive Director went over financial update prepared in advance by Doug Morison, Finance Manager.

Start of fiscal year 2021- cash position is strong. All municipal annual contributions including the \$25,000 from the Town of Scarborough have been received.

With all the changes caused by COVID, this will be a year unlike any other, but BSOOB Transit seems to have been able to secure a reliable revenue stream that will keep us in operation through the year despite the drastic drop in Ridership and Fare and Other Revenues.

The rural funding through the ME DOT is solidly in place with CARES act funding that allows us to cover the expenses of running both the Intercity and the ZOOM runs. The regular 5311 funding is also in place and will be available to be used once the CARES funding is used up.

The Urban CARES funding is a little more convoluted. We have the regular 5307 grants in place and available for drawdowns which covers the first 50% of allowed expenses. The CARES 5307 funding will be available for us to draw down to fund those expenses that normally would have been covered by other revenue streams such as Fares, Repairs, Contract Stops and Advertising. In this manner, our operations are somewhat buffered from the vagaries and uncertainties that COVID has thrust upon us. Municipal contribution will make up the balance.

We also have some additional funds that can be used that is equal to the amount of the Municipal Contributions that were originally scheduled for this year, but were not requested in recognition of the significant funding issues our owner municipalities are facing. Unfortunately, this funding is not as beneficial to us as the actual contributions would have been as it cannot be used for local matching, and in fact can only be used to cover operating and other allowed expenses. As such, it has strings attached where the true municipal contribution is “money in the bank”.

While most of the routes did not collect fare revenue, we did start the Trolley season in July with fares being collected. For the month of July, we collected \$20k in revenues, as opposed to \$63k the previous year. We also recognized \$11k in contract stop revenue in July, which is essentially unchanged from the previous year.

Additional funding from the 5307 CARES Act will become available to use to fund 100% of those expenses that are COVID Related, such as disinfectants, masks, gloves, equipment to sanitize and to protect staff and drivers such as protective barriers and Ultraviolet sterilizers for our HVAC system at Pomerleau Street. These funds have also been used to pay our staff that were unable to work their normal hours as a result of changes to the schedules, shut downs and reductions in service. This additional funding will become available to use later on in the year after PACTS has been able to compile all the needs.

**Motion by Alan Minthorn to accept the financial reports. Seconded by Louise Reid. No discussion. Vote by roll call. All were in favor. Passed unanimously.**

6. **Executive Director’s Presentation** – Executive Director Tony Scavuzzo presented via shared screen.

**COVID-19 Response Update:**

- Continue to board buses from rear, hand sanitizer on board, fog daily etc. May contract in future.
- Increased service August 2nd
  - Portland IC, Black/Orange, Blue White full service
  - Introduced new Sunday service
- UNE service has started as of Friday, August 21, full service.
- Trolley season will end Labor Day. Happy we had service safely and successfully. Ridership down by two-thirds.
- Monitoring Zoom Express ridership toward increased service, Down 80%.
- Maroon Line will stay suspended indefinitely.

## COVID-19 Response – Ridership update (Daily Averages thru 8/20)

	<u>Pre-COVID 19</u>	<u>Post COVID-19</u>	<u>Delta</u>	<u>Last 2 weeks</u>	<u>Delta</u>	<u>High</u>
Zoom Express	90	14	(-84%)	15	(-83%)	19
Local Urban	294	145	(-51%)	206	(-30%)	232
Portland Intercity	78	58	(-25%)	69	(-12%)	90
<b><i>Total ridership back to 63% of expected (last 2 weeks)</i></b>						
Trolley	1400	434	(-69%)	522	(-63%)	1466

### Progress Update

- 2016 & 2019 Triennial review responses are still in process at FTA.
- Started process to get our system into Google Transit.
- October 1 is looking like target for electronic fare payment to go live, resume collecting fares on Transit side.
- NTD reporting for 2019 was accepted by FTA.
- 5307 (annual urban operating) & 5339 (discretionary Trolley grant award) both entered in TrAMS successfully.
- Renewed lease at STC for 3 years with annual “reopeners”.

### Project Update

- Wifi on board – Installs down to 2 trolleys left. No hurry.
- Electronic Fare collection – Testing system internally and with sister agencies. Beginning to create accounts and promote.
- New Zoom coaches – Grant money available. October is remains delivery date. In revenue service shortly after.
- Electric buses – Delivery date still November 2021. Completing bus specifications/configuration planning with Proterra.
- New Trolleys – Hoping to start RFP process soon. Have all fiscal support except match money for 1 of 8 trolleys.

### Handbook

- Employee Handbook – Suggestions made by Transit Committee members regarding some wording and content. Edits suggested.
- Updates will be made and reviewed by attorney working towards final piece for approval.

### Goals

- Identify opportunities for Training for self and Committee.
- Develop protocols for customer service and assistance after regular business hours.
- Have certified HR person on staff.
- Develop organization purchasing policies.

## Accomplishments

- Reorganized company
- Launched Pulse project
- Implemented AVL system
- Updated employee handbook (current & legacy)
- Changing external perception
- Electronic Fare Box technology
- Welcoming 1st new vehicles in 10 years
- Electric buses/Section 106 completion
- New/Effective website developed
- Settled 2018 grant overspend issue with FTA Region 1
- Established relationships with City/Town Managers
- Re-established relationship/contact with Maine Turnpike
- Created internal Performance Management process (EPP)
- Rescuing UNE route toward transition to Downtown Circulator
- Rebranded company
- Established presence at the Saco Transportation Center
- Secured \$1.1M FTA/MEDOT grant
- Fixing FTA triennial audit gaps (current & legacy)
- Navigating through pandemic challenges
- Transitioned advertising to internal resource
- Transitioned to new Finance Manager
- Introduced uniforms/laundrying for garage
- Began operator uniform program

## Challenges

- Funding
- External Perception
- Effects of COVID-19 – where will we be in the future? Fare recovery? Ridership?
- Age of vehicles
- Internal needs growing - Staff not growing. Need new eyes/skills.
- Costs continue to rise
- Consolidation talk – Transit Tomorrow

**Future Funding Ladder** - Future funding for the transit agency was discussed. Tony Scavuzzo, Executive Director and Doug Morison, Finance Manager have talked about what would be a healthy funding amount.

Nearby towns of South Portland and Westbrook have contributions of 650k and 800k respectively to their bus services. Tony and Doug estimate that getting to 720k for BSOOB Transit would be a healthy benchmark, which is 240k per community. Tony would like to keep strategizing to get to this healthy funding level.

Curt Koehler also noted that South Portland's 650k is for operations only. Their capital needs are separate in the South Portland budget.

Members were in agreement of the importance of this effort.

**Downtown Circulator** – Tony and staff will be working on a schedule for the downtown circulator coupled with UNE partnership. Community Multiscale Air Quality (CMAQ) funds would fund this operation at 80%. Tony waiting to hear if these funds come through. (Even if CMAQ funds do not come through, it would be covered at 50% through Urban FTA funding.) Tremendous potential.

Curt Koehler noted that the CMAQ funds would be beneficial because the 3 years of that running gives it time to catch up with the added miles to the NTD which will then raise FTA cap.

Next Meeting – Tony will send a meeting invite for October.  
November/ December - One meeting will be scheduled in early December.

Tony Scavuzzo acknowledged and thanked Louise Reid for her dedication and years of service on the Transit Committee since 2003 and wished her well in her future endeavors. This is her last meeting with the Transit Committee. BS00B Transit staff and all the members of the Transit Committee echoed their thanks and appreciation for all of Louise's many contributions.

**Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 5:12 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Anne Austin