



Biddeford Saco Old Orchard Beach Transit Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 3, 2020

Meeting held by Video Conference

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/697553901>

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Access Code: 697-553-901

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, Kenny Blow, Bette Brunswick, Doris Ortiz, Jessa Berna, Curt Koehler (arrived late)

Staff: Tony Scavuzzo, Craig Pendleton, Anne Austin, Doug Morison

- 3. Public Comment** – Questions from the public were as follows:
Will there be another survey given out to get information of how well the organization did with COVID-19 response?

Surveys are slated to be done sometime after the winter holidays.

Are there by-laws available for the public to view?

Yes, the transit agreement can be put on the website.

Is there a way the public can directly contact the Committee anonymously?

It was suggested that interested parties could contact the Chairman directly through e-mail and he could take to the Committee. Due to Right to Know law there is no guarantee of complete anonymity however.

- 4. Approval of the Meeting Minutes –**
Motion by Alan Minthorn to approve the October 29, 2020 meeting minutes. Seconded by Doris Ortiz. No discussion. Vote by roll call. Jessa Berna, Doris Ortiz, Alan Minthorn, Bette Brunswick, Kenny Blow were all in favor. Passed unanimously.

- 5. Presentation – Rick Harbison, Senior Planner, Greater Portland Council of Governments (GPCOG)**

Mr. Harbison presented the plans of the Biddeford Saco Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plan and their progress of the planning.

6. Financials – Finance Manager, Doug Morison reviewed the financials as of October 31, 2020:

It is early in the fiscal year and as we are 33% through the twelve-month year, we are tracking approximately 33% of the way through our expense budget and revenue budgets. This year has been extraordinarily unique due to COVID and that continues to be the case as with the exception of Trolley season, we have not been collecting fares. As a result, Fare revenue for FY 21 is at \$62k compared to \$251k the previous year at this time. We recognized \$6k in Fare Revenue from the UNE contract that was signed and payment received. In October, we started collecting fares for the first time since the COVID crisis started. Using the Automated Fare Payment system that also kicked off on October 1, we are able to collect fares with reduced contact of cash and also offer the benefits of capping the fares for the frequent users of transit services.

As a result of this drop in Fare Revenue, Fare revenue has fallen from 16% of our revenue at this time last year to a mere 3%. Grant revenue has increased has been used to cover the remaining expenses, going from 42% of our overall revenue picture to 71%. This large increase is also attributable to the purchase and funding for 2 new ZOOM coaches that were delivered in October

Through July and August, And September, we have not had to use the municipal contribution to fund operations. In October, we used approx. \$8k in Municipal Contributions. The Rural routes are being funded at 100% the Rural Cares Act leaving the regular 5311 funding untouched and available to use after Rural Cares funds are used up. There is a strong likely hood that these funds will last for at least a full year.

Our Personnel expenses are being closely monitored and we are currently at 30% of budget rather than 33% again because we had 2 open positions that have not been filled at this time. Fuel costs have also been less than originally budgeted due to using only 1 bus on the Zoom line, and reduced hours and Sunday, as well as keeping the Maroon line on hold until further notice. Fuel costs are only 23% of budget. Other Costs are a bit higher than 33% at 47%. This might be partially explained by some costs being front loaded to the beginning of the year. Insurances often have a larger first payment required and Audit services are all used during the first quarter of the year. The previous year we were at 53% of budget for the same time period, so our efforts to be frugal are having some effect.

As mentioned above, we took the delivery of 2 coaches in October, and the \$1,045,460 grant has been used to drawdown 80% of the overall cost, and the remaining 20% was funded by the restricted balance. There will be some additional fit out costs that will be drawn down in the next 30 days or so and that should see the completion of that grant.

In summary, we continue to expect that with careful husbanding of our financial resources, along with the assistance from the CARES act funding, Transit can hope to complete the year with a more solid financial position.

Approval of the financials –

Motion by Curt Koehler to accept the financial reports as presented. Seconded by Alan Minthorn. No discussion. Vote by roll call. Jessa Berna, Doris Ortiz, Alan Minthorn, Bette Brunswick, Kenny Blow, Curt Koehler were all in favor. Passed unanimously.

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

COVID-19 Response – Ridership update (Daily Averages thru 11/18)

	Pre-COVID 19	Post COVID-19	Delta	Last 2 weeks	Delta	High
Zoom Express	90	15	(-83%)	15	(-83%)	22
Local Urban	294	172	(-41%)	175	(-41%)	256
Portland Intercity	78	58	(-26%)	43	(-45%)	98

Total ridership back to 52% of expected (since October 1)

Progress Update -

- Health Insurance- switching to Anthem. Harvard Pilgrim did not have a similar plan to stay with. Cost of their next plan closest to ours was 14+% increase in premium. Anthem we could move laterally to for <2% increase. Have let staff know and hosted informational meetings (Cross Insurance).
- Interviewed for P/T Customer Service position to begin to expand hours of operation and mitigate current constraints.
- Thanksgiving gift cards were disseminated to staff.
- Hardcopy of updated employee handbooks have been given to staff with form for return of acknowledgement.

Project Update -

Electronic Fare collection – Smoothing out initial challenges.

New Zoom coaches – In revenue service. Continuing promotional campaign directly in mill buildings.

New Trolleys – Received approval to be part of HGAC program. Orientation activities in December. All funding secured.

Electric buses – Delivery date October 2021. Configuration and Infrastructure discussions ongoing. Site visit revealed charging infrastructure in front of STC is impractical.

Future Funding Ladder Proposal –

Municipal Contribution: (currently \$165,000)

Proposed -

FY 2022 - \$200,000

FY 2023 - \$220,000

FY 2024 - \$240,000

Upcoming Public Engagement –

11/30 - Saco City Council – Electric bus, Downtown Circulator and COVID updates

12/3 – Saco Traffic Safety Committee

12/4 – UNE – Service update, Evolution to Downtown Circulator

12/9 – Town of Scarborough – Future of service (with Metro and GPCOG)

12/17 – Maine Turnpike Board of Directors – Pitch Route 1/Turnpike corridor funding

***City of Biddeford – waiting for council workshop

***Town of Old Orchard Beach – Hope for January to give update

Future strategy discussion –

- PACTS changes in committee structure and funding framework are on the horizon.
- Executive Director, Tony Scavuzzo voiced concerns that this could open door for “consolidation”.
- Tony’s initial vote was “No” on new funding framework.
- Voted “Yes” in subsequent discussion.

Next meeting – January 2021 – RKO our auditors will present.

February 2021 – Planning an afternoon summit for deeper discussion on future strategy and direction.

8. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 5:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Anne Austin