



MUNICIPAL PARTNERS TRANSIT COMMITTEE
Machias Savings Bank, Brewer Community Room
Wednesday, August 1, 2018
9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Members

Jeremy Caron, City of Brewer
Jim Chandler, Town of Hampden
Rich Cromwell, City of Bangor
Kyle Drexler, Town of Orono
Ron Harriman, City of Old Town
Linda Johns, City of Brewer
Amy Rau, Maine DOT

BACTS Staff

Rob Kenerson, BACTS
Connie Reed, BACTS

Guests

Marcia Larkin, Penquis Lynx
Tammy Tewhey, Penquis Lynx
Lisa Feldman, Transportation for All
Jack McKay, Transportation for All

Community Connector Staff

Sherri Clark, Community Connector
Jeremy Clay, Community Connector
Laurie Linscott, Community Connector

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:35 a.m. by Rob Kenerson. Rob told the Committee that Karen Fussell was unable to attend the meeting, so Linda Johns moderated the meeting in her absence. Introductions were made.

Selection of Committee Vice-Chair: Michael Crooker resigned his position with the City of Bangor last month. Karen Fussell is assuming the role of Committee Chair, leaving the Vice-Chair position vacant. Linda called for nominations. Rob Kenerson told the Committee that Belle Ryder had expressed willingness to serve as the Committee Vice-Chair and had gotten approval from Sophie to take on the role. No other nominations were made. Jim Chandler made a motion to nominate Belle Ryder as the Committee Vice-Chair. Jeremy Caron seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Approval of June 6 Meeting Minutes: Jeremy Caron made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Laurie Linscott seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Local Share Cost Allocation: The Committee began discussing Community Connector funding and allocation of costs among the municipalities in April. In May, the Committee was provided fiscal year 2017 data on hours, miles, rides and buses to review as part of the FY19 Community Connector budget presentation and discussion, with a suggestion of calculating the averaging percentage of all four factors

to the total system for each municipality to determining a formula to allocate local share among each municipality. Using the average of all four factors, the allocation of local share was broken down as follows:

- Bangor – 60.551%
- VOOT – 17.448%
- Brewer – 15.027%
- Hampden – 6.975%

The Committee asked for additional illustrative information showing various formulas translated into dollars. The memo dated May 24 provided those illustrations. Based on a discussion and feedback provided by Karen Fussell, the memo dated July 25 was prepared using the most recently available fiscal year 2019 budget information to further illustrate and explain four different models of allocating the local share of costs.

The projected total operating and maintenance expenses for the fixed-route system in fiscal year 2019 is \$3,284,481. Fares and Revenues are projected to be \$780,000; FTA Section 5307 funding used is projected to be \$1,278,000; and MaineDOT is projected to be \$101,109. This leaves expenses of \$1,125,372 to be paid locally.

Connie Reed told the committee that after speaking with Karen, she understood better why there was some confusion about linking ridership to revenues. While increased ridership does potentially generate more fare revenues and reduces the amount of both federal and local share required as the various types of fares utilized and the limited amount of data collected on those fare types limits the ability to do adequate analysis of an estimated fare revenue per ride. Since fares and advertising revenues are deducted from expenses prior to arriving at the total local share required, ridership as a factor was removed from any proposed formulation of allocating local share. The factors considered use fiscal year 2017 data to determine each municipal percentage of total.

	Bangor	VOOT	Brewer	Hampden
Percent of Annual VRM	53.020%	21.763%	16.230%	8.987%
Percent of Annual VRH	61.144%	16.031%	15.852%	6.974%
Percent of VOMS	61.538%	15.385%	15.385%	7.692%

The first model presented was an intricate itemized model where each expense line item was assigned a specific factor – Vehicle Revenue Hours (VRH), Vehicle Revenue Miles (VRM) and Number of Vehicles Operated in Annual Maximum Service (VOMS) - and calculated individually using the corresponding factor. This method is time consuming and labor intensive, can be open to interpretation and has the greatest potential for error.

The second model presented was a simplified model which applies various factors to different categories of expenses. While this method also uses a combination of factors to determine cost allocation, it is less labor intensive than the first model. This model uses the percentage of VRH for all operating expenses; percentage of VRM for maintenance expenses, with the exception of maintenance

labor, which uses the percentage of VOMS; and percentage of VOMS for ADA Complementary Paratransit Service expenses.

The third and fourth models presented are simplified models that apply a municipality's percentage of the system's total VRH or VOMS as the formula for allocating the municipality's share of the local cost. This method is the least time consuming, least complicated and most straightforward method of allocating costs.

The goal of updating the local cost allocation methodology is to provide a formula that is as equitable and easy to understand as possible; and minimize the amount of staff time required for recordkeeping. Models 3 and 4 both meet the goals of providing a simple data driven calculation which is easy to understand, and minimizes recordkeeping requirements. Because the majority of the expense associated with operating a bus system is bus operator wages and benefits, using VRH as the factor in determining a percentage of local costs emerges as the most equitable of all factors.

Linda Johns asked how the formula would be affected if there were changes to routes and/or schedules during the fiscal year. The formula is based on data from the most recent completed fiscal year, which means for fiscal year 2019 costs, fiscal year 2017 performance data will be used to determine a municipality's percentage of costs. For fiscal year 2020 costs, performance data from fiscal year 2018 will be used, and so on.

Laurie Linscott told the Committee that the University of Maine had contacted her about extending hours of the VOOT route for two more trips per day Monday through Friday during the regular academic calendar year from late August to mid-May. The University would pay for all costs associated with the extended hours as a pilot project. There are two new buses being delivered in October so that will provide more flexibility with the fleet in adding service.

Laurie Linscott said with only one month in the new fiscal year, using the new method of recordkeeping as one system, there is a noticeable time savings. The cost allocation methodology will be used to determine local costs this fiscal year (2019). She also told the Committee that she has not sent the municipalities their FY19 letters of quarterly costs which are usually sent in July because she was waiting for the Committee to make a decision on the allocation formula prior to sending them. Those letters should be sent to the municipalities within a couple days. The FY18 last quarter bills will be sent as soon as the year-end is finalized and closed out. Those bills should be sent at the end of August or the beginning of September.

Ron Harriman made a motion to allocate the annual local cost share based on the simplified model using percentage of total vehicle revenue hours as presented in Model 3. Jeremy Caron seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Community Connector Projects/Initiatives Update: Laurie Linscott updated the Committee.

ADA Complementary Paratransit Service Contract - The City of Bangor was unable to negotiate a contract which would meet all the City's requirements for providing ADA Complementary Paratransit

Service with the agency that responded the RFP. They are currently evaluating other options for providing the service, including performing the service in-house and/or offering a hybrid of contracted service and in-house operations. No decision has been made yet. The current MOU for service has been extended.

Pickering Square Construction and Temporary Buildings - The Pickering Square parking garage is getting a facelift. The entrance to the garage is being moved to the Water Street side. The bus depot will be relocated during the construction, which will begin mid-September to early October and is estimated to take between 12 and 15 months to complete. The bus depot will be using two separate temporary buildings for the waiting area and bathroom. The temporary buildings are ADA accessible and have electricity/heat/air conditioning/running water. The ticket vending machine will be located inside the waiting area building and soda/candy vending machines will be outside the waiting area.

Transit Asset Management Plan – The TAM Plan is due October 1 and is next on Laurie’s list of projects to complete. The Plan has not been started yet. A presentation of the TAM Plan will be done in October or November.

Bus and Bus Facilities Grant Application – The applications are due August 6. Laurie is submitting two separate funding requests. One for up to seven new buses and bus support equipment and one for a new bus facility. Laurie told the Committee that she needs two separate letters of support from the municipalities by Thursday so she can submit the grant applications by Friday, August 3 at the latest. A projected timeline for the projects has not been finalized. If awarded funding for bus purchases, the timeframe for delivery of the new buses will likely overlap the buses being purchased with funds awarded from the last grant in fiscal year 2017. Estimated costs for the proposed projects with estimated local cost share are not yet completed. MaineDOT VW settlement money is available to replace non-clean diesel 2009 and older transit buses. MaineDOT offered VW settlement money for local share to match the \$1.9 million grant awarded in fiscal year 2017 to purchase five new buses. There is no confirmation that, if awarded, MaineDOT would be willing to match this grant with VW settlement funds. The local match for the FY17 grant is being calculated and Laurie is working with MaineDOT.

Jack McKay told the Committee that Transportation for All has heard concerns about Pickering Square waiting areas and bathrooms from riders. Transportation for All met with Tyler Collins to discuss the concern of riders, that should the decision be made that the buildings remain in Pickering Square, the temporary buildings would become the permanent bus facilities.

Laurie Linscott told the group that in the process of writing the Bus Facilities Grant, the City of Bangor Engineering Department was assisting with a plan to maximize the space in Pickering Square that is buildable. Laurie is meeting with the Engineering Department in the afternoon.

Lisa Feldman asked that the City of Bangor reassure people that the move to the temporary buildings doesn’t necessarily mean the bus depot is being evicted from Pickering Square and there is room available in Pickering Square to build facilities outside of the floodplain and meet all the required setbacks.

Municipal Events/Projects/Developments Update:

Jeremy Caron noted there will be night work on Outer Wilson Street in Brewer from Downeast Toyota to the City line beginning August 12.

Ron Harriman inquired about Rangeley Road in Orono. Rob Kenerson reported that it is expected that the roundabout will be mostly complete by the time the University starts fall session, and should be done in October. Rangeley Road will be usable by mid-August.

Sherri Clark told everyone that anytime there is a detour or any road work or event that may affect any of the bus routes to send her an email or give her a call.

MaineDOT Update:

Amy Rau reported that Lori Brann is working on a Section 5339 Discretionary Bus and Bus Facilities Grant Application to purchase buses for MaineDOT's FTA funding sub-recipient rural transit systems. Amy has been working with transit agencies to ensure that their Drug and Alcohol policies are FTA compliant. Lori Brann is working with a consultant at RLS to assist MaineDOT with their TAM Plan. If there are any questions that come up while preparing the TAM Plan, contact Lori and she may be able to help. MaineDOT has not yet had the opportunity to digest the recently published Public Transit Agency Safety Rule, but will be looking at that soon.

Other Business:

Connie Reed announced that the Tri-State Transit Conference brings together State DOTs and transit agencies from Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont. This year's conference is being held September 12-14 in North Conway, New Hampshire.

Laurie Linscott announced that they brought the Trolley to the meeting for Committee members to see. The City is in the process of developing a Trolley Policy which will be brought to the City Council for approval on August 13th. The Policy is currently very narrow. No private entities will be allowed to use the Trolley – only municipalities. A non-profit group may petition the Bangor City Manager for approval to use the Trolley. If anyone is interested in using the Trolley, call Laurie. It is available from Memorial Day to Labor Day and is intended to be used for events and special occasions. It holds 24 people, can accommodate two wheelchairs, and cost \$100 per hour, which includes the cost of the driver. Jeremy Clay is providing training to the drivers because it drives a little differently than a regular transit bus. Advertising can also be done on the Trolley.

Jim Chandler announced that the Town of Hampden had a Planning Open House last night for planning a Hampden Town Center. Transportation, and transit in particular, were mentioned positively at the Open House.

September Agenda Items: Connie Reed reminded everyone the next meeting is scheduled for

September 5. Laurie Linscott agreed to host the meeting at the Community Connector's new Administrative Office. Agenda items in September will include FY18 ridership and discussion of the Agreements between the municipalities and the City of Bangor for providing bus service.

Future Agenda Items: Connie Reed told the Committee that Karen Fussell had suggested that we find a guest speaker to educate the group on Transit TIFs. Connie said that she thought Evan Richert may be someone to contact. Laurie Linscott said she would contact CTAA to see if they had anyone who could offer some guidance.

Transit Performance Measures and Targets will likely be discussed at more than one meeting over the next year.

Other Discussion:

Laurie Linscott reported that the Advertising contractor is putting proposals out daily and reminded everyone to hand out the transit advertising materials locally.

Jack McKay reported that November is Transportation for All's Ride the Bus Month. A link will be shared that can be posted on municipalities' social media pages. Linda Johns asked to get the information to Connie Reed and she can provide it to the members.

Amy Rau noted that GoMaine's Alternate Commute Month is in October. She told the group that she is MaineDOT's mobility manager and is updating the MaineDOT webpage. If there is anything applicable to mobility, she can share it on MaineDOT's website as well.

Adjourn: Laurie Linscott made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:25 a.m. Jeremy Caron Seconded.