



MUNICIPAL PARTNERS TRANSIT COMMITTEE

Brewer Auditorium

Wednesday, January 8, 2020

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Members:

Belle Ryder, Town of Orono
Kyle Drexler, Town of Orono
Jeremy Caron, City of Brewer
Linda Johns, City of Brewer
Lori Brann, Maine DOT via Phone

Community Connector Staff:

Laurie Linscott
Sherri Clark

BACTS Staff:

Rob Kenerson
Connie Reed
Cindy Meservey

Guests:

Lisa Feldman, Transportation for All
Darcy Cooke, Transportation for All
Jack McKay, Transportation for All
Marcia Larkin, Pequis

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:37 a.m. by Belle Ryder. Introductions were made.

Approval of November 13, 2019 Meeting Minutes: Kyle Drexler made a motion to approve the November 13 meeting minutes as presented. Belle Ryder seconded the motion. Unanimously approved.

Financial Report – Budget to Actual YTD Revenues and Expenses: Connie told the group that the financial report is not available but will be provided at the next meeting.

3-Year Projected Financial Plan: The 3-year projected financial plan for operations was provided to Connie by Debbie. Using what was provided, Connie broke down the estimated local funds required for operating expenses using the vehicle revenue hours formula. Connie stated that what is shown for 2020 federal funding will be different than what is programmed in the 2020 TIP because the grant for the transit study was not submitted to FTA and funds were not obligated in 2019. The federal funding for the transit study will be obligated in 2020, increasing the Federal \$5307 funding by \$80,000; however, based on the June 30, 2019 income statement provided at the November meeting, the local share for the transit study was already accounted for in the operating expenses in 2019.

Connie noted that an updated capital plan had not been provided. Debbie suggested that the group start with the prior year provided plan to begin discussions. In the 2020 TIP Program of Projects, Laurie has programmed formula §5339a funds for purchasing or leasing ADA vehicles, and the FY18 §5339b grant funds awarded for the purchase of 7 buses and bus technology is also programmed in the 2020 TIP. Connie presented those projects in the 2020 column to show the total cost of the projects, the federal share, and the local share of the capital projects. In addition, under the 2021 column, the §5339b grant awarded for the transit center and related amenities is broken down to show the federal and local shares of the costs of that capital project as well. Laurie told the group that she will not be ordering the 7 buses.

The group questioned the projected health insurance costs since the amount budgeted in 2020 was much higher than 2019 actual, but the amount projected in 2021, dropped significantly again. Laurie stated she and Sherri just reviewed the health insurance costs for the last six months and it was right around \$150,000. There was an increase in the number of drivers who enrolled and more dental and HSA participation this year. There is a different contract rate for the next six months of the fiscal year for 2020.

Belle asked if the operating projections have been confirmed. Laurie explained that the figures shown represent what the City knows at this point. Belle pointed out she will need to submit her first budget draft by February 3, so she is trying to figure out how accurate these projections are.

Linda Johns asked about the large jump in payroll from 2020 to 2021. Laurie said that there are currently 32 drivers and they need 37. The new transit center will be opening in the Spring of 2021 and will be manned with a dispatcher. Minimum wage increased to \$12 per hour on January 1.

Transit Study Implementation Plan: Laurie told the committee that the RFP for technology should be going out this week. She anticipates getting responses and doing vendor interviews in the very near future.

The City spoke to Stantec about the timeline on the study. In order to make the technology work, designated bus stops need to be implemented. The stops can be up to 1/8 of a mile apart. The City can set the distance up to the maximum. The distances will differ depending on rural versus urban routes. The plan will be presented to the public showing the current and the proposed. Stantec has told them to use the stops for at least a year before making any changes. A Bus Stop Policy must be written. The City currently has a policy in draft form.

Linda Johns asked if that policy will be shared with the other municipalities for their input, and if the other municipalities will be consulted for their input prior to any public presentations, as well as prior to any final bus stops being designated. There may be other issues within the municipalities which may affect the stops.

Rebranding of the system will also be done. This includes renaming of routes, color coding routes, renaming the Community Connector, etc. Stantec recommends holding public meetings once a list of new names has been developed. The buses will need to be painted. Stantec suggests doing any changes all at once.

The current planned implementation steps resulting from the study include obtaining technology, designating bus stops, and rebranding the system.

Belle suggested that a subcommittee be formed to report the progress of the implementation to the municipal partners transit committee and coordinate with the municipalities. She will reach out to Karen and discuss.

Community Connector Projects/Initiatives Update: The City has applied for VW settlement funds to match four of the seven buses which will be purchased with the FY18 §5339b Bus and Bus Facilities grant. Laurie has a call with Kelly at MaineDOT this week and should know by early next week if the funds have been awarded. The VW funds must be spent in two years. These funds would be used to purchase four 35-foot buses.

Laurie is gathering information about leasing versus purchasing ADA Paratransit vehicles. Those vehicles will be in-house by July 2020. She will touch base with Kelly at MaineDOT.

Laurie told the committee that she was awarded a \$5339b grant to construct a transit center. The plan is to break ground summer 2020 and move into the location between June 2021 and Fall 2021. Landscaping would be done in 2021. The hope is that the project will be completely done by 2022. She showed the committee a mock up of the proposed design in Pickering Square. Bangor Council is having a Workshop meeting on Monday, January 13 at 5:15 to discuss the location of the Transit Center. There will be a public comment period. The City Council will vote on this at the January 27 City Council meeting.

At the request of the Bangor Livable Communities Group, Laurie is applying for an AARP Challenge Grant for a bus shelter. She has not decided where it will be located yet, either at the Library, Judicial Center, or Volunteers of America.

Maine DOT Update: The STIP is coming out soon. There are just a few technical things that need to be done.

Other Business: Connie told the group that Karen suggested meeting quarterly rather than every other month. Members present agreed with the suggestion. Belle suggested implementing a sub-committee for the Transit Study items. This sub-committee could then report back to the full membership.

Belle suggested meeting the second Wednesday of the month quarterly starting in May. However, the second Wednesday in November is Veteran's Day. The group agreed to go back to meeting the first Wednesday of the month.

The group will meet the first Wednesday of May, August, November, and February.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 6.

Next Meeting: May 6, 2020. Location to be determined.

Adjourn: 11:09 a.m.