



MUNICIPAL PARTNERS TRANSIT COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2020
9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/140173626?pwd=TGc0TjhpMTRTcnhWTUlhbVVkcmxrUT09>

Meeting ID: 140 173 626

Password: 178328

AGENDA

1. Call to Order – Chair
2. Public Comment

Members of the public in attendance of today's meeting have an opportunity to provide public comment on today's agenda items.

3. Approval of January 8, 2020 Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)
4. Community Connector Staff Updates (Attachment B) – Community Connector Staff
5. CARES Act Funding (Attachment C)
6. Financial Report (Attachment D) – Community Connector Staff
7. FY2021 Budget (Attachment E) - Community Connector Staff
8. Capital Plan (Attachment F) - Community Connector Staff
9. COVID-19 Service Changes and Effects – Community Connector Staff
10. Municipal Partner Updates – Municipal Partners
11. MaineDOT Update – MaineDOT Staff
12. Other Business
13. Next Meeting
Wednesday, September 5, 2020
14. Adjournment



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.

Community Connector Staff Updates

April 29, 2020

Status of Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan - At the end of February, the FTA Acting Administrator sent letters to State DOTs and Transit Agencies to remind them of their obligations under the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) regulation. By **July 20, 2020**, FTA will not obligate grants unless the applicant certifies they have met the requirements of the PTASP regulation.

On April 23, FTA provided notice to recipients and subrecipients subject to the PTASP regulation, that until **December 31, 2020**, FTA will refrain from taking enforcement action pursuant to 49 U.S.C. § 5329(g) and the FTA Master Agreement (26) (October 1, 2019) if those FTA recipients and subrecipients are unable to certify that they have established a compliant Agency Safety Plan. FTA expects affected recipients and subrecipients to continue to work toward meeting the July 20, 2020 effective date to the extent practical under the current circumstances caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency.

The City of Bangor is still working through the Plan and will be bringing the Director of Safety into the process. The goal is to have the draft completed by July 20.

Regional Bus Stop Policy- Community Connector staff has been working with a consultant on developing an approach to proceed with the creation of the regional stop policy, implementation of stop project, as well as technology. He is putting together a proposal of what it would look like if he were to perform the work. We will continue to keep the partners updated on the schedule and scope of this work.

Designated Bus Stop Project – Similar to the Bus Stop Policy, the Community Connector staff has been working with a consultant on the best, most practical approach for implementation of the designated bus stop project. Community Connector is also in the process of applying for a discretionary grant funding for this project (see below).

ADA Vehicle Purchase/Lease – There is a project currently programmed in 2020 TIP to purchase or lease ADA Paratransit vehicles using fiscal year 2019 and 2020 §5339a formula funds. The City of Bangor is proposing to use CARES Act funds to procure these vehicles. Community Connector staff is working on obtaining three quotes for the vans. The Community Connector staff is also reviewing the State of Oklahoma's RFP for ADA vehicle procurement for opportunities for the Community Connector to jointly procure vehicles.

Status of VW Settlement Funds Application – In January, MaineDOT awarded Community Connector \$519,000 in Volkswagen Diesel Emission Settlement funds to be used as the local match to the §5339b Bus and Bus Facilities Discretionary Grant awarded in FY18 for the purchase of seven new buses. Community Connector staff is investigating the possibility purchasing under the existing contract Green Mountain Transit in Vermont has with Gillig. Community Connector staff intends to order five (5) buses in fiscal year 2021 and two (2) buses in fiscal year 2023.

COVID has delayed manufacturing of buses at the Gillig plant.

Technology RFP – Community Connector staff is working with a consultant on developing the Technology RFP. The goal of the RFP is to select a consultant to implement the Technology recommendations from the Stantec Transit Study.

Transit Facility Construction – John Theriault, the Bangor City Engineer, is in the process of completing the documentation required for FTA’s environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). An RFP for Architectural and Engineering services has been drafted and will be posted once FTA has issued a class of action determination, made determination of required assessments (if any), and notified the City of Bangor that they may act on the application for financial assistance. The FTA application for financial assistance cannot be submitted until the STIP has been approved.

This type of procurement requires a Qualifications-Based Selection (QBS) process, therefore, technical proposals will be reviewed and rated using the responses to the proposer information outlined in the RFP by a selection committee. We would like to have one representative of the Municipal Partners Transit Committee participate in the selection committee. If you are interested, please let Rich Cromwell know.

Jeff Davis, the City of Bangor Landscape Architect and Project Engineer will be the project manager for the transit facility project.

Bus Stop and Shelters Grant Application – Application is still in progress to be filed by Tuesday. Grants Funds to be used for the construction of stops and amenities. Community Connector staff is working with a consultant to finalize the cost of this project.

CARES Act and Emergency Relief Program Summary

Prepared by BACTS Staff

April 17, 2020

Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act - On April 2, Transportation Secretary Chao announced that recipients of urbanized area and rural area formula funds will receive funding through the CARES Act at 100 percent federal share, no local match required. These funds can be used for operating expenses, preventative maintenance, paratransit service, rolling stock, equipment, and other expenses generally eligible under the program to prevent, prepare for, and respond to COVID-19.

In addition, administrative leave for transit personnel due to reduced operations during the emergency or because of a quarantine as a result of COVID-19 are eligible for reimbursement with CARES Act funds. Charter service not normally eligible under FTA programs, is eligible, IF implemented in order to deal directly with the pandemic, and can be used for up to 45 days without a waiver from FTA.

The City of Bangor Community Connector has been apportioned **\$4,003,122** in CARES Act funding. These funds can be used for **any** expenses occurring after January 20, 2020. Unlike regular §5307 formula funds, there is no lapse timeframe associated with the funding; however, FTA encourages recipients to use the funds as expeditiously as possible because Congress could rescind funds if they remain unspent.

All Federal Transit program requirements apply to the CARES Act funding (such as DOL certification, Buy America, etc.). However, the Act states with the exception of capital expenses that involve substantial change to location, function or capacity of an asset (e.g., fleet or facility expansion), expenses paid with the CARES Acts funding are not required to be included in a TIP/STIP or the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. Accordingly, the CARES Act funds must be applied for separately from any fiscal year 2020 or any other apportioned funding. It cannot be aligned with any other funding or existing award.

FTA Emergency Relief Program (§5324) - On March 13, FTA Acting Administrator Williams issued a notice of concurrence with declarations of emergencies issued by Governors that relate to COVID-19. This allows FTA grantees to use their formula funds for operating expenses at 80 percent federal share, rather than 50 percent, from the date the Governor declared an emergency. Governor Mills declared a Civil State of Emergency in Maine on March 15.

The increased federal share remains in place for eligible expenses incurred for the duration of the relevant state of emergency. Recipients may use any currently apportioned §5307 funds for expenses, including those that may be currently obligated for other purposes but not yet expended. **Only expenses directly related to the responding to the COVID-19 emergency are eligible** under the Emergency Relief Program at the higher federal share. For example:

- i. Removal of Health and Safety Hazards (e.g. cleaning vehicles and facilities)
- ii. Costs associated with shutting down or restarting service
- iii. Materials such as hand sanitizer, gloves, soap, cleaners
- iv. Emergency protective gear relevant to the emergency
- v. Temporary service, not part of regular service, provided in response to the emergency

FTA also established an **Emergency Relief Docket** to allow transit providers in States where the Governor declared an emergency related to COVID-19 to request temporary relief from Federal requirements under 49 USC Chapter 53, as well as any non-statutory FTA requirements.

Community Connector Income Statement 3/31/2020

	Fixed Route/ADA Operations			Black Bear Orono Express			
	Budget	Actual	Actual as % of Budget	Budget	Actual	Actual as % of Budget	
Expenditures:							
Wages	1,393,589	1,109,831	79.64%	54,272	28,997	53.43%	<i>a</i>
Fringes (all Other)	298,039	199,049	66.79%	11,550	5,375	46.54%	<i>a</i>
Health	382,929	242,269	63.27%	6,370	1,715	26.92%	<i>a</i>
Supplies	23,000	28,703	124.80%	-	-		
Contractual Services	174,800	139,569	79.84%	4,100	4,120	100.49%	<i>b</i>
ADA	200,000	44,583	22.29%	-	-		
Utilities	9,500	6,110	64.32%	-	-		
Interfund (all Other)	13,750	14,159	102.97%	-	-		
Maintenance	573,462	496,024	86.50%	55,000	24,790	45.07%	<i>c</i>
Fuel	309,100	228,435	73.90%	15,000	8,717	58.11%	<i>d</i>
Printing	18,500	18,023	97.42%	-	-		
Other	200	-	0.00%	500	-	0.00%	
Office & Bus Equipment	60,193	23,689	39.36%	-	-		
BBOE Admin	(21,806)	(17,676)	81.06%	21,806	17,677	81.06%	<i>e</i>
Total	3,435,256	2,532,768	73.73%	168,598	91,391	54.21%	
Revenues:							
Operating							
Fares	670,000	495,486	73.95%	-	-		
Advertising, Other	60,000	35,000	58.33%	-	-		<i>k</i>
Subtotal	730,000	530,486		-	-		
Grants							
Federal Operating	1,375,000	-	0.00%	-	-		
Federal Capital	40,000	-	0.00%	-	-		
State Grants	101,109	101,109	100.00%	-	-		
Subtotal	1,516,109	101,109	<i>a</i>	-	-		
Budgeted Local Share	1,189,147			168,598			

Community Connector Income Statement 3/31/2020

Commentary Fixed Route:

a As there was limited actual data related to personnel and vehicle costs related to ADA paratransit being performed in house, the bulk of the costs are included in the ADA budget line, this will create slight variances especially in the area of wages and fringe.

Federal grants are typically not awarded until January or February. Therefore, drawing down of the funds typically occurs well into the third or fourth quarter of operations. On February 3, 2020 the federal appropriation for the operation of the Community Connector was announced. Actual Federal allocation was \$1,418,145.

Variance Report - Fixed Route Items that are +/- 5% of YTD % 75.00%

- b* Certain fringe amounts related to the MEPERS debt are not due until June.
- c* The budget for health insurance assumes a 10% increase effective January 1st, as well as an estimate of types of coverage chosen, actual results are lower than budget assumptions.
- d* One time costs of \$8,919 for security and access control to Bus Barn.
- e* First full year in the office building, \$ amount of variance is minimal at \$1k.
- f* The majority of this line is for snow removal and ice treatment at the admin and depot sites.
- g* Actual maintenance costs are trending higher through 1st three quarters than anticipated - (engine replacement)
- h* Printing costs were higher due to the printing of rider guides which occurred during the summer. Printing needs are not incurred evenly throughout the year, it is anticipated that this variance is a timing issue.
- i* Funds were included to begin the project of deploying technology updates, which have yet to occur.
- j* Administrative costs are based on actual fixed costs incurred, which were slightly higher than anticipated through March 31, 2020.
- k* Advertising revenues are lower than anticipated due fewer ads and the timing of payments from the contractor.

Commentary - BBOE: Items that are +/- 5% of YTD % 75.00%

Due to the seasonality of the service - start date of late August, and the operation ceasing in March due to the pandemic. Assume budget is based on 8 months of operations, and March 31st represents 6 months.

- a* Actual employees working this route had lower wages and thereby benefit costs.
- b* Vehicle insurance paid for the entire year. Most BBOE printing was completed as of March 31st.
- c* Actual maintenance costs are lower than anticipated
- d* Actual fuel usage lower than anticipated - operations ceased mid March
- e* Administrative costs are based on actual fixed costs incurred, which were slightly higher than anticipated through March 31, 2020.

Community Connector
Summary of Billing and Grant Status
31-Mar-20

The adopted FY 2020 budget anticipated \$1,415,000 in Federal 5307 grant funds. On February 4, 2020, the federal appropriation for the operation of the Community Connector was announced as \$1,418,145.

With the release of the CARES Act funding, the Community Connector intends to utilize its 5307 Federal appropriation to fund operation through March 31, 2020. The CARES Act funding will be utilized for Community Connector operations from April 2020 - June 2020 (initial estimated use during the last quarter is approximately \$850k), as well as the entire proposed fiscal year 2021. In addition, the proposed FY 2021 budget, anticipates utilizing \$300k of CARES funding for capital purposes (i.e. ADA paratransit, technology or bus stops)

Status as of March 31, 2020

5307 Federal Appropriation - Expected to be submitted for approval and draw down			
(the balance of the FY 20 appropriation	Operations		644,783
will remain available for use in future	Preventative Maintenance		372,347
years)	ADA (Paratransit)		172,581
	Capital		14,951
			1,204,662
	Existing 5307 Grant		10,301
	Total Federal Funding		1,214,963

Local Share Fixed Route Operations:

Hampden	47,692
Brewer	108,903
Veazie	9,058
Old Town	37,262
Orono	36,713
UMaine	26,900
Bangor	419,691
	686,219

Partner Billings Year to Date (2 Qtrs)

		Operating	Cap Reserve	Total	Paid	Outstanding
Hampden		41,322	6,082	47,404	47,404	-
Brewer		94,358	13,886	108,244	101,301	6,943
Veazie		7,848	1,156	9,004	9,004	-
Old Town		32,280	4,750	37,030	37,030	-
Orono	Fixed	31,832	4,684	36,516	36,516	-
UMaine	Fixed	23,288	3,428	26,716	-	26,716
		230,928	33,986	264,914	231,255	33,659
Bangor (pd full yr cap reserve)		419,691	107,030	526,721	526,721	-
Orono	BBOE	42,148	2,500	44,648	44,648	-
UMaine	BBOE	42,148	2,500	44,648	-	44,648
		84,296	5,000	89,296	44,648	44,648
BACTS	Remix	5,000	-	5,000	-	5,000

Detail of Outstanding Invoices*

Invoice #	Invoice Date	Partner	Operating	Cap Reserve	Other	Total
1111001712	9/7/2019	BACTS	-	-	5,000	5,000
1111001721	9/11/2019	Brewer	-	6,943	-	6,943
1111001726	9/11/2019	UMaine	22,181	2,964	-	25,145
1111001728	9/26/2019	UMaine	10,537	-	-	10,537
1111001810	2/26/2020	UMaine	32,718	2,964	-	35,682
			65,436	12,871	5,000	83,307

* If payment of the invoices has been submitted and is not reflected, please provide check number check date and check amount, City Treasury staff will research the misapplication of any payment

**Community Connector
Proposed FY 2021
Budget Summary**

Operating Expenditures	2019	2020	2021
Wages	1,370,135	1,447,860	1,613,682
Health	270,136	389,299	414,914
Other Fringes	225,644	244,205	263,447
Subtotal Personnel	1,865,915	2,081,364	2,292,043
Clothing	5,000	5,000	7,500
Supplies	17,250	18,000	20,000
Contractual Services	376,061	378,900	228,462
Utilities	12,500	9,500	9,750
Interfund	1,114,281	985,313	1,193,736
Miscellaneous	200	200	188
Debt Service	63,462	65,384	69,115
Outlay	52,500	60,193	72,500
Total Expenses	3,507,169	3,603,854	3,893,294

Operating Revenues

Cares Act Federal Funding	-	-	1,766,940
FTA Federal Formula Funding	1,320,001	1,415,000	-
State Grant	101,109	101,109	101,109
Hampden	104,058	82,535	82,535
Brewer	176,679	188,737	188,737
VOOT	193,663	190,520	190,520
Bangor	651,670	727,355	727,355
University/Orono Shuttle	179,989	168,598	168,598
Fares	700,000	670,000	627,500
Advertising	80,000	60,000	40,000
Total Revenues	3,507,169	3,603,854	3,893,294

Reserve Funding(Implemented FY 2020)

Hampden	-	12,198	12,198
Brewer	-	27,738	27,738
VOOT	-	28,035	28,035
Bangor	-	107,030	107,030
	-	175,001	175,001

Additional Comments

The Community Connector was awarded \$4,003,121 in CARES Act funding. These funds may be used to fund all expenses normally eligible under the system's annual 5307 formula grant funding, which includes operating, paratransit, preventative maintenance, capital and planning activities. While the funding does not require a local match in any category, the budget assumes the same level of local match as the current year to compliment the CARES Act funding.

As the City learns more about the "reopening strategy" for the State of Maine and the continued collapse of the oil markets, it is likely that staff will need to bring forward a recommended adjustment to the current proposed FY 2021 operating budget. Additional funding necessary to support further adjustments will likely be funded by increasing the amount of proposed CARES Act funding to support operations.

Within the next 4-6 weeks, staff anticipates bringing forward recommendations to begin the implementation of 2 primary goals of the transit study; transit technology and bus stops. This discussion will include a work plan as well as identify potential existing and pending funding sources.

FY21 NEW PROGRAM AND CAPITAL REQUESTS

<u>Department</u>	<u>Request</u>	<u>New Program</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Capital</u>	<u>Fund Y/N</u>	<u>Operating Budget</u>	<u>Improvement Reserve</u>	<u>Bond Issue</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Comm Connect	PT to FT Safety/Trainer	26,984			N					
	ADA Vehicles (4)			200,000	Y				200,000	Federal CARES Funding
	Bus Support Equipment			98,006	Y				98,006	CARES - stops/shelt/tech, etc
	5 Buses			2,595,000	Y				2,595,000	Fed Grant & VW Funds
	Transit Center			803,750	Y	160,750			643,000	Fed Grant
	Community Connector Reserve		107,030		Y				107,030	From Bangor Reserve

**Detailed Summary - Community Connector
Capital Improvement Program
2021-2025**

Project	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	Totals
Transit Buses (5 FY 21, 2 FY 23)	2,595,000		950,000			3,545,000
4 ADA Vans	200,000					200,000
Transit Center	803,750	803,750				1,607,500
Bus Support Equipment	98,006					98,006
Total	3,696,756	803,750	950,000	-	-	5,450,506

City Manager Recommended Budget

Recommended Funding Source

Federal CARE Funding	298,006
Federal FY 18 Discretionary	2,076,000
Federal FY 19 Discretionary	643,000
VW Settlement Funds	519,000
Operating Budget	160,750

Total 3,696,756