

PACTS Policy Board

March 23, 2023

11:00 am–1:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Municipal Members		
Arundel	VACANT	
Biddeford	Jim Bennett	
Cape Elizabeth	Matt Sturgis	✓
Cumberland	Bill Shane	
Falmouth	Hope Cahan, chair	✓
Freeport	Jake Daniele	✓
Gorham	Ephrem Paraschak	
North Yarmouth	Diane Barnes	✓
Old Orchard Beach	Diana Asanza	✓
Portland	Jeremiah Bartlett	✓
Portland	Kevin Kraft	✓
Raymond	Nathan White	
Saco	Patrick Fox, vice chair	✓
Scarborough	Angela Blanchette	✓
South Portland	Kate Lewis	✓
Standish	VACANT	
Westbrook	Eric Dudley	
Windham	Barry Tibbetts	
Yarmouth	Scott LaFlamme	✓

Non-municipal Members		
MaineDOT	Dale Doughty	✓
Maine Turnpike Auth.	Erin Courtney	
Active Transp. Specialist	Kara Wooldrik	✓
Environmental Specialist	Allen Armstrong	✓
Transp. Equity Specialist	Andrew Blunt	
Transp. Equity Specialist	Yura Yasui	
RTAC Liaison	Tom Milligan	✓
BSOOB Transit	Chad Heid	✓
Casco Bay Lines	Hank Berg	✓
GP Metro	Greg Jordan	✓
NNEPRA	Patricia Quinn	✓
Reg. Transp. Program	Jack DeBeradinis	✓
So. Portland Bus Serv.	Donna Tippet	✓
York Co. Comm. Action	Tom Reinauer	✓

Non-voting Members		
SMPDC	Stephanie Carver	
Federal Highway Admin.	Rachel Levee	
Federal Transit Admin.	Leah Sirmin	

1. Welcome

Hope Cahan opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of the January 26 Policy Board Meeting Minutes

Scott LaFlamme moved to approve the January 26 meeting minutes as written; Allen Armstrong seconded. Jeremiah Bartlett, Hank Berg, Jack DeBeradinis, and Kevin Kraft abstained; all others were in favor. (Weighted vote: 34–0; standard vote: 14–0)¹

¹ Per PACTS Bylaws, Policy Board votes are weighted by municipal population.

4. Chair's Report

Hope Cahan thanked Pat Fox for serving as chair of the January meeting in her absence.

5. Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) Report

At its March meeting, RTAC reviewed the draft Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and recommended it for approval by the Policy Board. RTAC reaffirmed the Executive Board's decision to specify a safety goal of zero traffic fatalities and injuries in addition to the requisite safety targets.

6. Staff Report

Transit ridership continues to recover in the wake of the pandemic. Ridership on the region's ferry and rail services is approximately 90 percent of pre-pandemic levels; ridership on the region's bus-based services is approximately 70 percent of pre-pandemic levels.

With the 2023–2024 Call for Projects, project sponsors will be required to complete Horizontal-Vertical Alignment Complete (HVAC) before applying for PACTS' FHWA funding. This requirement was approved by the Policy Board at its September 2022 meeting as a cost control measure.

Staff welcomed Kevin Kraft as Portland's newest board representative, and thanked Roberto Rodriguez for his service to the board.

Biddeford-Saco-Old Orchard Beach Transit received \$350,000 under the federal SMART grant program to support planning for on-site renewable energy production, storage, and management strategies.

7. Approval of the 2023–2026 Transportation Improvement Program

The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) documents upcoming federally funded transportation projects for the next four years, including projects from PACTS' Complex Projects Program, Collector Paving Program, and Transit Program. MaineDOT submits additional projects. At its March meeting, RTAC reviewed the draft TIP. Key discussion points included:

- RTAC recommended that PACTS incorporate climate goals and targets into future TIPs.
- RTAC recommended that PACTS work with MaineDOT to ensure greater input on MaineDOT-sponsored projects in the region
- RTAC reaffirmed the Executive Board's decision to specify a safety goal of zero traffic fatalities and injuries in addition to the requisite safety targets.

Public Comment

None.

Board Discussion

Jeremiah Bartlett noted PACTS' share of FHWA project funding totaled approximately 14 percent.

Motion

Matt Sturgis moved to approve the 2023–2026 TIP as presented; Chad Heid seconded. All were in favor. (Weighted vote: 34–0; standard vote: 14–0)

8. Additional 2022–2023 Unified Planning Work Program Funding

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) budgets the region's transportation planning workwork for the next two years; including staffing and administering PACTS, providing technical assistance to members, and procuring consultants and other planning resources. The 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provided an anticipated additional \$1.2 million for PACTS' 2022–2023 UPWP. Staff developed a number of recommendations for programing this funding, many of which were approved by the Policy Board at its January meeting. In the meantime, a survey of board members shows strong alignment between the remaining recommendations, *Connect 2045*, and member priorities. The UPWP can be amended as priorities are refined, and developing the 2024–2025 UPWP will begin soon.

In addition to the original recommendations and in response to a suggestion at the January Policy Board meeting, staff have prepared an "Alternative Action" that allocates an additional \$72,000 to support the implementation of Transit Together.

Public Comment

None.

Board Discussion

Greg Jordan asked what informed staff's recommended funding allocations. Staff noted the recommendations were informed by the percent expended of each budget element, rate of expenditure, and anticipated need. Some budget elements are new, but are recommended for funding based on alignment with *Connect 2045* or federal compliance.

Kate Lewis supported the alternative action to allocate additional funding to *142504—Regional Transit Coordination*. She asked what the anticipated deliverables might be. Staff suspected the funding could

support microtransit research and implementation, and a regional branding study. Kate supported increased funding for microtransit planning.

Donna Tippet asked how the new funding would impact local match. Staff noted impacts to local match are yet to be determined, and depend on final agreement with MaineDOT as to their contribution.

Jeremiah Bartlett asked whether there had been consideration of allocating additional funding to 142606—*Enhanced Project Scoping*, particularly in light of the new HVAC requirement. Hope Cahan suggested further discussion at a future update.

Motion

Kate Lewis moved to amend the UPWP as recommended by staff, except to allocate an additional \$72,000 to 142504—*Regional Transit Coordination* as shown in the "Alternative Action"; Greg Jordan seconded. Donna Tippet was opposed; all others were in favor. (Weighted vote: 57–1; standard vote: 21–1)

9. Project Update: Vision Zero Action Plan

The Vision Zero Advisory Panel recommends several factors for prioritizing projects, including:

- Existing level of risk, including fatal and serious crash history
- Public feedback of areas of concern
- Targeting investments to benefit historically disadvantaged or vulnerable populations

The plan will also include recommended action steps and design interventions to mitigate safety risks.

Public Comment

None.

Board Discussion

Patricia Quinn noted there are federal funding programs and other resources to support rail crossing safety projects. Matt Sturgis suggested that information be shared with the board members.

Several noted the relative safety of transit and active transportation, and that encouraging a shift towards those modes will have positive safety outcomes.

Pat Fox noted the interaction of the Vision Zero Action Plan with the recently adopted Regional Complete Streets Policy. He encouraged the group to also focus on driver education and behavior.

Motion

Greg Jordan moved to endorse the Vision Zero Advisory Panel's recommended factors for project prioritization; Scott LaFlamme seconded. All were in favor. (Weighted vote: 58–0; standard vote: 22–0)

10. PACTS Year in Review 2022

Staff presented highlights from the 2022 PACTS Year in Review, which documents the investments PACTS made in 2022, staff's ongoing planning, programmatic, and policy development work, and an implementation tracker based on the goals of *Connect 2045*.

Public Comment

None.

11. Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

12. Adjourn

With no objection, the meeting was adjourned.