



PACTS TRANSIT COMMITTEE WORKSHOP MINUTES April 28, 2020

Name	Affiliation	Attendance
Hank Berg, Vice Chair	Casco Bay Island Transit District	Y
Lori Brann	MaineDOT	Y
Chris Chop	Maine Medical Center	Y
Robert Currie	YCCAC	Y
Jack De Beradinis	RTP	Y
Casey Gilbert	Portland Downtown	N
Rebecca Grover	Maine Turnpike Authority	Y
Art Handman	City of South Portland	Y
Bruce Hyman	Planning Committee Appointee	Y
Gregg Isherwood	Custom Coach & Limousine	N
Greg Jordan, Chair	METRO	Y
Patricia Quinn	NNEPRA	Y
Tony Scavuzzo	BSOOB Transit	Y
Guests		
Ben Blunt	Concord Coach	
Ken Capron	MicroRail	
William Gayle	NNEPRA	
Nate Moulton	MaineDOT	
For GPCOG		
Kristina Egan, Carole Martin, Ryan Neale		

1. Welcome

Greg opened the meeting.

2. Open Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. Acceptance of March April 9, 2020 Transit Committee Workshop Minutes

There were no comments or revisions to the minutes from April 9, 2020.

4. Review and Approve Draft Split Letter for Phase One of CARES Act Funding

The transit agencies confirmed the accuracy of the funding amounts included in the draft split letter. Patricia Quinn confirmed NNEPRA will provide the region's 1% security requirement in the phase one split letter.

5. Discussion of CARES Act Funding Approaches and Processes

Kristina Egan introduced consultant Carole Martin, who will assist PACTS in developing an approach and process to programming CARES Act funding. Prior to the meeting, Carole connected with transit agencies to get a sense of their priorities, including:

- The ability to collectively serve customers in the region
- Social distancing measures will need to be incorporated as services are resumed
- Ensure that some relief is provided to municipalities who provide local match
- Plan for the future post-pandemic including maximizing efficiency in serving transit customers

Kristina said that while there is a lot of uncertainty and many unknowns, we should do the best we can with what we know. Given the uncertainty, the allocation process needs to be executed with caution and in a very short timeframe to enable agencies to access Phase II funding in July. The goal of the discussion is to define a process, establish a timeline, and determine goals and objectives. The discussion will begin with the Transit Committee and will be taken to the PACTS governing committees. The framework and allocations will incorporate public input.

Greg Jordan opened the discussion for public comment. Ben Blunt of Concord Coach Lines noted concern over their business prospects when service is resumed. Ben asked if there is an opportunity for private operators to be eligible for 5307 formula funds to help with operations in the early months as passengers resume travel, or if there are any creative solutions that could assist Concord Coach Lines with their recovery.

Nate Moulton said that there have been initial discussions with Concord Coach Lines regarding possible assistance using 5311 intercity bus funds. Nate said that additional information provided to MaineDOT by Concord Coach Lines will be reviewed to determine if there is an opportunity for funding. Ryan said he had been told by FTA that intercity carriers are eligible for 5311 funds if they serve a rural population. Private operators would be eligible for 5307 funds if they have a contract in place with a direct recipient of 5307 funds or the State to provide service. Greg said that this means the contract operator is operating the service necessary or as directed by a transit agency or a government entity.

Carole Martin thanked the transit agencies for sharing with her their perspectives on things in the aggregate and on specific interests. Carole outlined the primary priorities:

- Discuss guiding principles and strategic priorities.
- Discuss any additional key considerations that may be lower priorities but important to identify, such as the inclusion of capital and repair expenses.
- Discuss whether the process should be done in the aggregate or in subgroups, as well as a process for public comment.

Carole said that transit agencies have indicated that a final determination should be made by June 30. The process needs to account for consideration by the PACTS governing bodies. Greg said only a solution for the next phase needs to be outlined by June 30 and that the remainder of the funds can be addressed later.

Jack De Beradinis asked if the expectation is that the FTA will provide additional funds if the current situation persists. Kristina said we do not know for certain and recommended that we should not expect additional funds beyond the CARES Act.

The group focused on guiding principles and strategic priorities to inform the committee timeline. The Committee developed several general major assumptions and principles to guide its thinking going forward. These include:

- Be conservative; assume no additional funds will be coming for recovery
- Focus heavily on ridership recovery and expect to allocate funding over multiple years
- Recognize that ridership recovery will be incremental, and the pace will vary among modes and agencies

- Factor in and develop models that reflect individual organizational circumstances
- Track trends in ridership data and incorporate into thinking for future phases
- Make the health and safety of staff and riders a top priority, and factor related expenses into allocations
- Communicate to build rider confidence in the safety of using transit and to rebuild ridership
- Seek public input about ridership expectations and needs
- Determine the role of normal funding sources and frameworks in future phases
- Determine the potential of CARES Act funds relative to other sources for capital projects

Given the nuance and complexity of the guiding principles and major assumptions, the committee agreed that a two-month timeline, ending June 30, would be appropriate to complete the next phase of funding.

6. Other Business

There was no other business.

7. Adjourn