



PACTS Executive Committee Minutes

June 2, 2020

Committee Members	Affiliation	Attendance
Jim Bennett	Biddeford	Y
Chris Branch	Central Subregion	Y
Jennifer Brickett	MaineDOT	Y
Hope Cahan	PACTS Vice Chair	Y
Erin Courtney	Maine Turnpike Authority	Y
Eric Dudley	Western Subregion	Y
Greg Jordan	Transit Committee	Y
Matt Sturgis, Chair	PACTS Chair	Y
Sarah Tracy	Freeport	Y
For GPCOG		
Kristina Egan, Aubrey Miller, Ryan Neale, Elizabeth Roberts		

1. Welcome – Matt Sturgis, Chair

2. Open Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. Acceptance of May 5, 2020 meeting minutes

Jim Bennett moved to accept the minutes, and Chris Branch seconded. The minutes were accepted unanimously.

4. Staff Report

The Transit Committee is developing a framework for allocating Phase II of the region's CARES Act funds. The top priority is to offset reduced operating revenue for transit agencies. Other potential priorities after Priority One has been addressed are

pandemic recovery and resiliency, transit system innovation, state of good repair, and direct municipal budget assistance. While maintaining current service levels is a priority, we also want to explore opportunities to better or more efficiently provide service. A public input process will begin shortly. The intent is for the Transit Committee to finalize this Phase II framework by the end of June.

The main themes for the *Transit Tomorrow* recommendations are to make transit easier, expand local connections, and undertake a mode-agnostic study for a rapid transit network. These all require improved land use and municipal cooperation to make transit as effective as possible. We will also be looking at costs and benefits. Attendees of the GPCOG Annual Summit were asked to provide input on the *Transit Tomorrow* recommendations and the CARES Act priorities. The group acknowledged Greg's excellent presentation and the success of the Annual Summit.

5. PACTS Transit Committee Membership

The group acknowledged Casey Gilbert's valuable contributions to the Transit Committee and discussed whether we should wait for Portland Downtown's new executive director to come on board before deciding on this seat. Casey's term is through December 2020. Kristina noted that it may be helpful to have a more in-depth conversation about Portland Downtown's membership on PACTS committees after the committee restructuring process. It was clarified that Casey had scheduling conflicts that interfered with her attendance of Transit Committee meetings.

Greg Jordan moved to appoint Amy Geren to fill the remainder of Casey Gilbert's term, and Hope Cahan seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

6. Transportation Improvement Program Federal Highway Administration Projects

The Beth Condon Trail project in Yarmouth and the Brighton Avenue project in Portland were programmed for preliminary design reports (PDRs) in the 2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP Committee in May recommended \$950K for the Beth Condon project and approximately \$2.1M for the Brighton Avenue project as well as \$200K for a PDR set aside. The new project for the PDR will be selected in the fall of 2020. Matt said both projects are important for the region and he is pleased to see them move forward.

Hope moved to adopt the TIP Committee's recommended allocation of 2023 FHWA resources, and Sarah seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

7. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments

MaineDOT has requested TIP amendments to withdraw a sidewalk rehabilitation project on Forest Avenue and to add a pavement resurfacing project on Route 115. Matt expressed support for both amendments. The Forest Avenue project was posted for public comment on May 5, 2020 and no public comments were received; the Route 115 project will be posted for public comment on May 28, 2020. Executive Committee approval is contingent on no substantive public comment being received.

Erin moved to approve the proposed TIP amendments and authorize staff to submit the TIP amendments to MaineDOT to be included in the State Transportation Improvement Program. Chris seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

8. Other Business

Chris Branch suggested we consider how to take advantage of potential federal stimulus funds. Appropriate road projects may include traffic signals, mill and fill, Brighton Avenue, collector paving, and high crash location projects – although high crash locations might be difficult as it would require more data. Traffic signals projects could be expedited by simplifying specifications and requiring contractors to do the design. Transit projects could include the ferry terminal, new vessels, and new buses.

The projects would need to be shovel ready and we do not currently have such a list for the region. Municipalities likely have projects that may be appropriate. Jim and Matt mentioned projects in their communities. The group agreed that developing a regional list of projects is preferable to having municipalities pursue funds on their own, and that going through this exercise will be helpful even if additional funds are not soon available. Kristina offered an approach that includes staff informing all municipalities of the opportunity, asking municipalities to identify shovel ready projects, and offering technical assistance to assess status. PACTS may then endorse and advance projects of regional importance. The group was supportive of this approach.

Kristina noted upcoming meetings with Senators Collins and King regarding relief to municipalities. Stimulus funds could be added to this advocacy as well. The group discussed potential federal funds that may become available in the near future.

Kristina noted that the PACTS recertification process will be on June 23 and June 25. This was delayed from earlier in the spring. The meetings will be conducted by the

Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration and will include staff, transit agencies, PACTS committee members, and members of the public.

9. Adjourn

Sarah offered a motion to adjourn, and Hope seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.