

Board of Directors – Remote Meeting

Minutes of the Greater Portland Transit District’s Board of Directors Meeting on

April 28, 2022 at 4:00 p.m. via Zoom

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

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Phone: (646) 558-8656 | Telephone participants: *9 to raise hand, *6 to unmute

<p>Board Members Present: Hope Cahan, Board President Mike Foley, Vice President Paul Bradbury Pious Ali (4:48 p.m.) John Thompson Merrill Barter Nat Tupper- Secretary Jeff Levine Ryan Leighton Andrew Zarro</p> <p>Board Members Absent: Ed Suslovic Ashley Rand Bill Rixon</p>	<p>Staff and Others Present: Greg Jordan, Executive Director Glenn Fenton, Chief Transportation Officer Shelly Brooks, Finance Director Danielle Nemeth, Human Resources Director Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant</p> <p>Public: George Rheault, West Bayside</p>
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Attendance roll call was taken by Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant.

1. With a quorum in place, the meeting was called to order at 4:04 p.m. by Hope Cahan, Board President.

2. Public Comment

George Rheault, West Bayside: Had wanted to participate in meeting about Gorham Connector, to share his concern about the project and the increase in greenhouse gas emissions. He gave kudos to Andrew Zarro for elevating the conversation at a City Council meeting. He doesn’t believe much of southern Maine is conducive to mass transit since you can’t have it until there are dense communities. Metro needs to emphasize that more often.

George also wanted it noted that Metro experimented with electric shuttle buses in 1995, which was very short-lived. When the new electric buses are launched with real passengers, Metro should remind people it is not their first experiment in this arena, as well as emphasize a lot of things have to fall into place to make these electric buses work. GR to Everyone via chat: <https://gpmetro.org/187/Background-History> 1995: METRO takes delivery of two battery powered electric buses for commuter shuttle service.

3. Meeting Minutes from April 28, 2022

John Thompson moved, seconded by Paul Bradbury, to approve the minutes of the March 24, 2022 Board of Directors meeting as presented. A roll call vote was taken by Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant. With approval by Ryan Leighton, Merrill Barter, John Thompson, Andrew Zarro, Nat Tupper, Jeff Levine, Paul Bradbury, Mike Foley, and Hope Cahan, **the motion passed unanimously by all those present.**

4. Executive Director's Report

- March was our highest month since 2020.
- All 66 Bus Operator positions are filled, but with many long-term and intermittent short-term absences minor reductions are currently in place for Route 1 and the Breez until 5/7/22.
- Schedule changes May 8 - August: breaking the Route 3-5 Interline and reducing route 3 headway from 30 to 45 minutes, so two routes will not always connect and continue; regular seasonal changes to Husky Line and Route 9 reverting to summer service.
- Intensifying recruitment efforts and plan to hire more than the approved Bus Operator FTEs.
- Anticipation of ARPA funded service improvements (requires 10 FTEs) allows Metro a period of time to manage an over-hire bridge.
- CDC/TSA ended enforcement of federal mask requirement on public transportation April 18. Last week, APTA reported an even split of transit agencies lifting, keeping, or taking no action on the requirement.
- Metro is exploring a local mask policy, consistent across transit partner agencies, aligning with the CDC's county-oriented "community level" designation.
- May 16 – electric bus launch event will be held at the Portland Ocean Gateway Visitor center with many prominent speakers. Delivery of the second bus is due shortly. Metro did have electric buses in the late 1990s. It was early technology, which Greg experienced in Arizona at the same time.
- Portland won the National Best Bus Stop contest against many other cities, with the last being Boston.
- Getting ready to launch Metro's first Diversity Equity & Inclusion Program.
- ARPA funding was approved for all four of Metro's projects, projects from other agencies and for CBL and NNEPRA. All seven transit agencies in the region and MeDot have to sign off on a split letter, but other agencies are against the funding vote PACTS advanced – discussions are ongoing.

5. 2021 Financial Audit

- Financial Statement Opinion –Unmodified
- Report Required by *Government Auditing Standards (GAS)*
- No Material Weaknesses
- No Significant Deficiencies
- Report Required by the Uniform Guidance
- Programs Tested:
 - Federal Transit Cluster
- Findings: None
- Report Required by the Maine Uniform Accounting & Auditing Practices for Community Agencies
- Reviewed SEDA only, no report modifications

At its April 27, 2022 meeting, the Finance Committee voted to move the audit results to the Board for approval.

Nat Tupper moved, seconded by Andrew Zarro to approve the 2021 Financial Audit as presented. A roll call vote was taken by Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant. With approval Ryan Leighton, Merrill Barter, John Thompson, Andrew Zarro, Nat Tupper, Jeff Levine, Paul Bradbury, Mike Foley, and Hope Cahan, **the motion passed unanimously by all those present.**

6. **Financial Reserve Policy**

The Finance Committee reviewed the Financial Reserve Policy at its March 2, 2022 meeting and approved the revised version at its April 27, 2022 meeting. The full policy was included in the meeting packets.

John Thompson moved, seconded by Paul Bradbury, to approve the Financial Reserve Policy as presented with the addition of language that any short-term expenditures be reported to the Board with an anticipated plan for repayment. A roll call vote was taken by Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant. With approval by Ryan Leighton, Merrill Barter, John Thompson, Andrew Zarro, Nat Tupper, Jeff Levine, Paul Bradbury, Mike Foley, and Hope Cahan, **the motion passed unanimously by all those present.**

7. **Sub-lease Terms with Atlantic Hardwood** (Pious Ali joined the meeting at 4:48 p.m.)

The Finance Committee reviewed this item at its April 27, 2022 meeting and recommended that Greg Jordan be authorized to enter into a lease agreement with Atlantic Hardwood and the item be moved forward to the Board with a recommendation for approval. Metro has a tentative agreement with Atlantic Hardwood for the entire space for a 5-year period, plus five one-year options. The agency agreed to a lower cost per square foot in exchange for the ability to extract itself from the lease in five years if it is ready for expansion.

There is a deficit during the first 2 years of this project (2021, 2022) during which time Metro is incurring expenses while a sub-lease is not yet active. Once the sub-lease activates in late 2022, then there is a projected surplus. ***Staff recommend that projected surpluses in fiscal years 2023 and 2024 be used to offset the deficits in 2021 and 2022 and replenish the agency's fund balance.***

Assuming the property can be purchased in 2024, then the sub-lease revenue alone will exceed Metro's expenses creating annual budgetary surpluses starting in 2025. ***Once there is greater certainty on net surpluses beginning in 2025, staff will seek board direction to determine the most advantageous programming.***

John Thompson moved, seconded by Jeff Levine, to authorize the executive director to execute a lease agreement with Atlantic Hardwood. A roll call vote was taken by Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant. With approval Ryan Leighton, Merrill Barter, John Thompson, Andrew Zarro, Nat Tupper, Jeff Levine, Paul Bradbury, Mike Foley, Pious Ali, and Hope Cahan, **the motion passed unanimously by all those present.**

8. **Future Agenda Items:** Add Collective Bargaining Agreement (June/August); Gorham Connector

- Comprehensive Review of Board Policies (2022)
- Cost-Revenue Allocation Policies-Procedures (2022)
- Metro Strategic Planning Effort (2022-2023)

9. Upcoming meetings

- Board of Directors – May 26, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.
- Executive Committee – May 11, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. – probably to be rescheduled
- Ridership Committee – May 19, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.
- Finance Committee – June 1, 2022 at 4:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

John Thompson moved, seconded by Nat Tupper, to adjourn. A roll call vote was taken by Lauren Shaw, Executive Assistant. With approval Ryan Leighton, Merrill Barter, John Thompson, Andrew Zarro, Nat Tupper, Jeff Levine, Paul Bradbury, Mike Foley, Pious Ali, and Hope Cahan, **the motion passed unanimously by all those present, and the meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.**