

PACTS Policy Committee

January 28, 2021

1:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Name	Affiliation	Attendance
Jim Bennett	Biddeford	
Jessa Berna	Saco	Y
Adam Bliss	PACTS Technical Committee	Y
Chris Branch	Portland	Y
Jennifer Brickett	MaineDOT	Y
Bob Burns	Gorham	Y
Hope Cahan, Vice Chair	Falmouth	Y
Stephanie Carver	SMPDC	Y
Jay Chace	Scarborough	
Jeff Demers	Biddeford	Y
Erin Courtney	Maine Turnpike Authority	Y
Nell Donaldson	Portland	Y
Eric Dudley	Westbrook	
Keith Gray	Portland	Y
Jessica Grondin	Portland	Y
Tom Hall	Scarborough	
Alex Jaegerman	PACTS Planning Committee	Y
Greg Jordan	PACTS Transit Committee	Y
Bryan Kaenrath	Saco	
Kate Lewis	South Portland	Y
Larry Mead	Old Orchard Beach	
Carlos Peña	FHWA	Y
Belinda Ray	Portland	Y
Bill Shane	Cumberland	

Leah Sirmin	FTA	
Brian Sites	North Yarmouth	
Kate Snyder	Portland	Y
Matt Sturgis, Chair	Cape Elizabeth	Y
Barry Tibbetts	Windham	Y
Donna Tippet	South Portland	Y
Sarah Tracy	Freeport	
Keith Trefethen	Arundel	
Rob Waeldner	Yarmouth	Y
Nathan White	Raymond	
VACANT	Standish	
For GPCOG		
Chris Chop, Andrew Clark, Kristina Egan, Ryan Neale		

1. Welcome

Matt Sturgis opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees.

2. Public Comment

No public comment was received.

3. Acceptance of the October 22, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Hope Cahan moved to accept the October 22, 2020 meeting minutes as written; Erin Courtney seconded. Kate Lewis, Barry Tibbetts, and Rob Waeldner abstained for having not been in attendance. All others were in favor

4. Staff Report

Staff welcomed several new committee members, including Brian Sites of North Yarmouth, Kate Lewis of South Portland, and Belinda Ray of Portland.

GPCOG has been leading an effort to prepare the region for potential federal stimulus funding. Staff have issued a call for projects to the region's municipalities and transit agencies, with particular emphasis on shovel-ready projects which would be ready for construction within six to nine months, and shovel-worthy projects which may require additional design or planning work. Staff have received approximately 35 proposals, covering a range of project types. The submission portal will close January 30. Staff will

then review the proposals received and identify appropriate funding streams as they become available.

Transit Tomorrow, the region's upcoming long-range transit plan, has been released for public comment. There is a portal on the project website for submitting comment. Comment is due by February 5. Staff have been presenting the plan to the region's transit agency boards, and will schedule a close-out event in March.

The PACTS region received \$53 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act funding. The most recent allocation provided \$11 million to the region's transit agencies to support reduced revenues, \$1 million for enhanced sanitation and communications, and \$1 million for projects aimed at system modernization and innovation to encourage riders to return when the pandemic has subsided. GPCOG hosted [Transit Disrupted](#), a webinar focused on the effect of the pandemic on transit service. Representatives from four of the region's seven transit agencies and 16 of the region's municipalities were in attendance. Staff encouraged those who were not able to attend to watch the video, available on the GPCOG website. The federal government approved \$14 billion in funding for transit through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations (CRRSA) Act. It is the understanding of staff that the PACTS region will not be eligible for this funding due to the significant funding already received via the CARES Act.

5. PACTS Committees and New Bylaws

At its October 2020 meeting, the Policy Committee approved a new structure for PACTS committees. The new structure includes a Policy Board and an Executive Board, largely retaining the functions of the existing Policy Committee and Executive Committee, and a new multidisciplinary Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) to serve in an advisory capacity. Additional working groups or task forces will be formed as needed to inform the RTAC on specific issues. The change is intended to simplify committee processes, increase transparency, improve efficiency for staff, and integrate new voices into regional transportation decision making.

A key deadline for the transition is March 4, by when municipalities have been asked to appoint their representatives to the new Policy Board, and existing Policy Committee members have been asked to appoint one municipal manager, one municipal public

works or engineering staff member, and one municipal planner or economic development staff member on a subregional basis. RTAC will include five seats for active transportation, environmental, and equity specialists. These seats will be appointed through an application-based process. Staff are reviewing the applications received so far.

Donna Tippet expressed concern with allowing the Policy Board chair to appoint the five application-based seats unilaterally. Kristina Egan noted staff will review applications and share them with the chair. These seats are intentionally non-municipal, to avoid any disproportional influence from any particular municipality. Kate Lewis suggested the chair's appointments require approval from the full board. Matt Sturgis agreed. Belinda Ray also agreed, while noting that these were five of a total 33 seats.

Jessa Berna asked whether transit agencies were intended to appoint their general managers. Kristina said that as it is a self-appointment, the transit agency could appoint a staff member or board member. Jessa also expressed concern with most municipalities having one member, and how that would not account for population variation among the municipalities. Chris Chop clarified that while most municipalities have one seat (Portland has two), the votes are weighted based on population.

Rob Waeldner suggested staff clarify the distinction between seats and votes. The proposed bylaws say, "All other members have one vote." Chris Chop clarified that that was intended to refer to non-municipal members. Staff will update the bylaws to reflect this.

Chris Branch noted that the Executive Committee had been working with this item extensively, and that the proposal—subject to the bylaws text changes as discussed—had been well vetted.

Belinda moved to approve the bylaws, subject to amending the final sentence of Section 2 to read, "All other non-municipal board members will have one vote." Kate Lewis offered amending Section 3D to include the following sentence: "Appointments made by the board chair must be approved by a majority vote of the board." Erin Courtney seconded.

Staff noted the Policy Board members in place at the March meeting will appoint the application-based members at the beginning of the meeting.

On the motion, all were in favor.

6. 2020–2021 Unified Planning Work Program Budget Adjustments

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is a two-year document that identifies planning priorities and initiatives. Staff have completed a mid-cycle review to evaluate budget and schedule changes, and have shifted project funding accordingly.

Bob Burns asked about the reduction in funding for high-crash locations, underscoring the importance of roadway safety. Chris Chop noted that the project is wrapping up soon and is under budget. Kristina Egan added that there was no scope change; staff were just able to complete the project with less funding.

Belinda Ray moved to approve the revised UPWP budget; Chris Branch seconded. All were in favor.

7. 2021 Safety Performance Targets

As a metropolitan planning organization (MPO), PACTS is required to adopt annual safety performance targets. PACTS monitors the following metrics:

- Number of Fatalities
- Number of Serious Injuries
- Rate of Fatalities
- Rate of Serious Injuries
- Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries

MaineDOT provides suggested targets based on statewide travel and crash data. At its January meeting, the Executive Committee discussed MaineDOT's suggested targets. The committee recommended accepting them, except where they exceeded the five-year average, in which case the committee recommended holding the five-year average, rounded down. At that meeting, the committee also instructed staff to identify strategies to achieve the targets. Staff have highlighted several initiatives underway that will have a positive impact on transportation safety in the region, including further

implementation of the Transit Stop Access Project, facilitating a traffic incident management group, implementing recommendations from the region's active transportation plan, developing a regional complete streets policy, and coordinating education and outreach efforts with partner organizations and other stakeholders.

Chris Branch moved to accept the recommended targets as presented, Belinda Ray seconded.

Bob Burns asked whether PACTS could get involved with an effort to curtail distracted driving, especially to address the issue of cell phone use while driving. Kristina suggested staff work with MaineDOT to identify any opportunities, to be discussed at a later Executive Board meeting. Jen Brickett said she would reach out to her colleagues.

On the motion, all were in favor.

8. GPCOG's Federal Transit Administration Direct Recipient Application

GPCOG is applying to become a direct recipient of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5307 Urbanized Area funding, with the intent of enhancing the agency's ability to attract and administer funds. Currently, GPCOG can only receive funds via another direct recipient as a subgrantee. Subject to committee approval, staff will prepare an authorizing resolution for the PACTS chair's signature. The GPCOG Executive Committee will then be asked for final approval.

Belinda Ray moved to authorize GPCOG to apply for Urbanized Area funding on behalf of PACTS; Bob Burn seconded.

Greg Jordan asked staff to clarify the distinction between *direct* and *designated* recipients. Chris Chop noted *designated* recipients were identified by the MaineDOT Commissioner to receive and apportion FTA funds. In the PACTS region, these include MaineDOT, five transit agencies, and PACTS. *Direct* recipients are able to apply for discretionary funding opportunities directly, without the need to contract with another recipient as a subgrantee.

On the motion, Matt Sturgis and Jen Brickett abstained. All others were in favor.

9. 2020–2023 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment

Projects funded with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funding must be included in PACTS' Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and MaineDOT's State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). PACTS must amend the TIP with each new project or change to an existing project. MaineDOT has asked PACTS to amend its current TIP to include updated project information for two projects that will likely advertise for construction prior to approval of the next TIP and STIP. The amendment was released for public comment on January 21.

Belinda Ray asked what defined "substantial" public comment. Ryan Neale noted that while staff generally receive no public comment on TIP amendments, "substantial" refers to any comment that addresses specific details or process of the amendment.

Erin Courtney moved to approve the proposed TIP amendment, subject to receiving no substantial public comment by January 30, and to authorize staff to submit the TIP amendment to MaineDOT to be included in the STIP; Hope Cahan seconded. Jen Brickett abstained, all others were in favor.

10. 2021–2024 MaineDOT STIP Project List

MaineDOT has developed the 2021–2024 STIP and associate regional TIPs. PACTS bylaws require approving the proposed STIP and PACTS TIP, releasing the documents for a 10-day public comment period, and adopting the final TIP for inclusion in the STIP. The attached errata sheet documents changes to projects during the approval process. Two projects in the PACTS region are noted: intersection reconstruction on Elm Street and Biddeford, and intersection reconstruction along Forest Avenue in Portland. MaineDOT intends to release the STIP for public comment in March after receiving approval from MPOs of their TIPs.

Hope Cahan moved to approve the TIP project lists, to allow staff to prepare the full TIP document to be released for a 10-day public comment period, and to delegate authority to the Executive Committee to approve the TIP at a future meeting; Chris Branch seconded. All were in favor.

11. Casco Bay Ferry Service TIP Amendment

MaineDOT has requested an amendment of PACTS' current 2020–2023 to include a project for preliminary engineering for pier and subsurface rehabilitation of State-owned ferry assets. The project is funded with \$80,000 in federal funding and \$20,000 in state funding. The amendment was released for public comment on January 21.

Belinda Ray moved to approve the TIP amendment adding a new project with \$100,000 in federal and state funds for improvements to state-owned assets serving the ferry, subject to receiving no substantial public comment by January 30, 2021; Chris Branch seconded. All were in favor.

12. Other Business

Jen Brickett noted that MaineDOT has recently released its three-year work plan.

13. Adjourn

Belinda Ray moved to adjourn; Kate Snyder seconded. With no objection, the motion carried.