



Meeting of the Board of Directors  
February 28, 2019  
**Meeting Minutes**

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Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of Thursday, Thursday, February 28, 2019 held at 4:00 p.m. in the Greater Portland Transit District's conference room, 114 Valley Street, Portland, Maine.

**Board Members Present:**

Belinda Ray – Board President  
Hope Cahan – Board Vice President (via telephone)  
Paul Bradbury – Board Treasurer  
John Thompson – Board Secretary  
Jim Violette  
Ed Suslovic  
Jeff Levine

**Staff and Others Present:**

Greg Jordan  
Ellen Sanborn  
Glenn Fenton  
Jennifer Ogden  
Matt Winston  
Lauren Shaw

**Board Members Absent:**

Pious Ali  
Merrill Barter  
Mike Foley

**Public:** None

- 1. The meeting was called to order at 4:09 p.m. by Belinda Ray, President of the Board.**
- 2. Public comment:**  
No members of the public were present.
- 3. Meeting Minutes:**  
Motion made by Paul Bradbury to approve the minutes, as written, from the December 12, 2018 Board of Directors meeting, seconded by Jim Violette and Ed Suslovic. **Motion passed unanimously by all present (Hope Cahan via telephone).**
- 4. Authorization of Bond for Local Share of New Bus Purchases**  
Ellen Sanborn, Finance Director, explained a Bond Bank application has been submitted for \$460,000 with a 10-year term, and is awaiting Board approval. This figure takes into account an \$11,000 surplus from the previous bond. John Thompson moved that the vote entitled, "Authorization for Borrowing (\$460,000)" be approved in the form presented to this meeting and that the Clerk file an attested copy of said vote with the minutes of this meeting. Ed Suslovic seconded the motion, which **passed unanimously by all present (Hope Cahan via telephone).**
- 5. 2019 Proposed Final Operating and Capital Budgets**  
The only change since October's Preliminary Budget approval was identifying the \$43,000 remaining budget reduction as an adjustment to insurance premiums. Greg Jordan noted that non-expansion ridership figures were softening toward the end of 2018, so the 2019 estimate of \$2.6 million in fare revenue will most likely be lower. Also, advertising revenue will be lower due to six buses leaving the fleet, which currently carry advertising, being replaced with six new buses that will not have

advertising on them, per the most recent Fleet Policy. Increased shelter advertising revenue has been included and there will be an increase in advertising rates. There are some shelters in inventory being held until funds are available for construction.

The Transit Stop Access program funding in the CIP includes 2019 for design and engineering, with construction funding being spread over three years (2020-2022).

Motion made by Jim Violette to approve the 2019 Operational budget as presented, seconded by John Thompson. **Motion passed unanimously by all present (Hope Cahan via telephone).**

#### **6. Plan for Bringing New Communities onto Metro Board**

Greg Jordan, General Manager, reviewed previous discussions on the various alternatives. At this time, the Executive Committee has suggested inviting the three northern communities, Yarmouth, Freeport, and Brunswick, to add one member each and increasing Portland membership to eight members or retaining the current five and giving them a weighted vote. The Board preferred to extend the weighted vote to current Portland members (1.6% each) to keep the Board from becoming too large. A weighted vote is only used if it is specifically called for by a Board member and the weight of each Portland vote does not change if not all Portland members are in attendance.

This will be an interim structure as the Board works towards a finalized Board structure.

Motion made by Jim Violette, seconded by John Thompson, to invite one (1) member from each northern community (Yarmouth, Freeport, and Brunswick) to join the Board of Directors and extending a weighted vote to each of the five Portland Board members (1.6 votes [amended per 3/28/19 meeting]) in lieu of increasing Portland membership to eight (8), when a weighted vote is requested, and maintaining this structure until such time as an additional community is preparing to join the Board, at which time the topic will be revisited.

Further discussion followed on how a weighted vote may affect Committee voting. If, after a Committee votes, any member can request that the vote be brought to the full Board. This is in conflict with the current structure the Board follows (Robert's Rules of Order), which holds if something fails at the Committee level it is a dead issue. This question will be brought to the Executive Committee for discussion before it is time for these three communities to be added to the Board. Our by-laws say we can adopt different rules if we so choose.

Motion made by Ed Suslovic, seconded by Belinda Ray, to amend the original motion to add that any Board member on a Committee can ask for an item to be brought to the full board if it fails in Committee. **Motion, as amended, passed unanimously by all present (Hope Cahan via telephone).**

#### **7. Metro Employee Personnel Policies revision**

The Executive Committee reviewed the proposed revisions to Metro's Employee Personnel Policies in January and asked that these revisions be shared with the Union. This has been done and the Union made comments on the revisions. Jennifer Ogden, Human Resource Director gave another brief overview of the revisions, which bring us current in several sections with wording required by federal law.

A motion was made by John Thompson, seconded by Paul Bradbury, to approve the revisions to Greater Portland Metro's Employee Personnel Policies, as presented. **Motion passed unanimously by all present, (Hope Cahan via telephone).**

#### **8. Automated Fare Policy and Technology**

Greg Jordan distributed a presentation to the Board, which had been updated since the original Board packet was sent out, following concerns raised by the Finance Committee at its meeting on February 25, 2019, which includes recalculated projections.

He reviewed the various portions of the presentation, including Fare Policy Goals, technology and costs, and the benefits of fare capping under each option (A and B). It has not been determined if there will be a fee for smart cards; an initial \$10,000 from the grant will be used toward purchasing smart cards and we will handle our own distribution to retailers as the consultants don't feel any vendor in our area would take on distribution since we are so small.

At this time, under either option, Metro will not meet the 25% fare revenue goal and will have to focus on cost containment and building ridership. The fare policy may also be revisited on a more regular basis instead of waiting a decade to make changes. An electronic system allows uneven adjustments to fares (\$0.02 or \$0.04) instead of needing whole number increases (\$0.05 or \$0.25).

Smart card vending machines are expensive to implement and maintain. Greg will ask the consultants about the cost of a simple vending machine that only accepts cash. Potential vendors will be required to list their retail relationships when submitting their bids.

Approximately 6% of cash customers use paper transfers; the amount affected by the lack of paper transfers will be a percentage of that 6% who don't change to the mobile app or smart cards (it is anticipated that 70% of ridership will enroll in a new payment system). More one-on-one public outreach will need to be done, cards made available on the buses for drivers to give out and explain how to load them.

A motion was made by Jim Violette to implement all changes at one time, rather than phasing them.

Discussion followed that the consultants want to roll out as least the mobile app so the vendor has time to acquire the data needed to build a fare-capping code. Also, the fare increase is needed sooner rather than later to meet the 2019 budget. There are also funds (\$100,000) available in 2019 earmarked to cover revenue loss due to not increasing fares earlier in the year, but with the knowledge that ridership is already softening, even that won't be enough if the fare increase is not implemented in the fall. Also, regardless of the timing of fare increases, the vendor needs data from at least the mobile app to get the data for fare-capping coded.

Motion made by Ed Suslovic, seconded by John Thompson, to launch the fare increase and mobile app together, while explaining that the technology for fare-capping will not be available until 2020. **Motion passed unanimously by all present (Hope Cahan via telephone).**

#### **9. General Manager's Report**

Shuttle Bus Zoom is going forward with hiring an executive director, but one whose background is bettering the management of the agency rather than specifically in transit.

MTA has put forward a time limit of June 2020 to Zoom on funding unless they are willing to form some kind of partnership with Metro.

**10. Future Agenda Items – none put forward**

**11. Upcoming Meetings**

- Finance Committee – March 6, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. - CANCELED
- Executive Committee – March 13, 2019 at 4:30 p.m. – to be rescheduled
- Ridership Committee – March 21, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. – to be rescheduled
- Board of Directors – March 28, 2019 at 4:00 p.m.

**12. Adjournment**

Paul Bradbury moved to adjourn, seconded by seconded by Ed Suslovic. With **unanimous approval by all present, (Hope Cahan via telephone) the meeting adjourned at 5:41 p.m.**