

# Finance Committee

February 27, 2025 | 4:45 pm – 5:15 pm



## Onsite:

Greater Portland Transit District  
114 Valley Street, Conference Room A | Portland, ME 04102

## Remote:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85631151700?pwd=yrEg1G6gcM33iqD4CPMY1eleeyLgsb.1>

Passcode: 101710 | Webinar ID: 856 3115 1700

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

## MEETING AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM	PRESENTER	ACTION or INFORMATION
<b>1. Call Meeting to Order (4:45)</b>	Paul Bradbury, Committee Chair	N/A
<b>2. Public Comment (4:45-4:50)</b> The Finance Committee welcomes public comment. For items NOT listed on this agenda, the chair will recognize speakers at this point on the agenda. For items on the agenda, the chair will recognize public comment following the staff presentation. There is a 3-minute time limit per speaker.	Paul Bradbury, Committee Chair	Information
<b>3. Approval of Meeting Minutes (4:45-4:50)</b> The committee will be asked to approve minutes from the October 15, 2024 meeting of the Finance Committee.	Paul Bradbury, Committee Chair	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>4. Committee Goal Setting (4:50-5:10)</b> Committee will review Metro's strategic plan and current goals. Committee will discuss a strategy to revise goals to inform the committee's workplan.	Paul Bradbury, Committee Chair	Information
<b>5. Suggested Committee Items (5:10-5:15)</b> Staff will review suggested items to be brought to the committee for consideration. Committee may add or delete items as desired.	Shelly Brooks, Finance Director	Information
<b>6. Future Agenda Items (5:10-5:15)</b> Committee members may request future agenda items. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2024 Financial Audit</li><li>• Goal Setting/Workplan Development (Strategic Plan)</li><li>• Review board policies pertaining to procurement</li></ul>	Paul Bradbury, Committee Chair	Information

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review of Metro’s local match allocation policy</li> <li>• Update of Metro’s DBE Program</li> <li>• Long Range Financial Forecasting</li> <li>• Review Metro’s Fund Balance Policy</li> </ul>		
<b>7. Upcoming Meetings (5:10-5:15)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance Committee – March 5, 2025 at 4:00 pm</li> <li>• Market/Coms Committee – March 12, 2025 at 3:00 pm</li> <li>• Plan/Ops Committee – March 19, 2025 at 10:30 am</li> <li>• Advocacy Committee – March 19, 2025 at 4:30 pm</li> <li>• Executive Committee – March 26, 2025 at 3:30 pm</li> </ul>	Paul Bradbury, Committee Chair	Information
<b>8. Adjournment (5:15)</b>	Paul Bradbury, Committee Chair	<b>ACTION</b>

*As of November 9, 2022 Greater Portland METRO is holding meetings of the Board of Directors (and its committees) in hybrid format, both in person at METRO’s offices and via webinar. The remote portions of all meetings are conducted in accordance with the requirements of [METRO’s Remote Participation Policy](#) (adopted August 25, 2022) as well as LD 1772, PL 2022 Ch. 666, and 1 MRSA Chapter 13, Subchapter 1.*



**Greater Portland Metro Finance Committee**  
**Wednesday, October 15, 2024: 4:15pm**  
**DRAFT Meeting Minutes:**

Member:	Municipality:	Role:	Status:
Paul Bradbury	Portland	Chair	Present
Merrill Barter	Falmouth	Member	Present
Tom Poirier	Gorham	Member	Present
Jeff Levine	Portland	Member	Present
John Thompson	Westbrook	Member	Present

Staff Present	Identified Members of the Public
Shelly Brooks – Chief Financial Officer Glenn Fenton – Executive Director, Interim Chief Transportation Officer Mike Tremblay – Director of Transit Development Deb Fitzpatrick – Accounting Manager	Ed Suslovic – Board President

**I. With a Quorum in place, this meeting was called to Order By: Paul Bradbury at: 4:15 pm**

**II. Public Forum:**  
No members of public present.

**III. Approval of September 4, 2024 Meeting Minutes:**  
Jeff Levine made a motion to approve the September 4, 2024 meeting minutes. John Thompson seconded the motion. After a roll call of the members present, it was unanimously approved.

**IV. 2025 Draft Budget:**  
Shelly Brooks leads item 4 by highlighting the 2025 Draft Budget of \$19,233,067 is an increase of 13.2% compared to 2024, with approximately \$1.3M of the increase related to the merger of the South Portland Bus Service with Metro. She continued by noting the following major budget factors for 2025: ARPA funded service improvements of \$1.4M, South Portland Bus Service expenditures resulting in approximately 8% of the total increase in base budget which includes 9 bus operators and \$160K in additional ADA Paratransit costs. Metro’s estimated expenditure increase accounts for approximately \$860k of the total increase, or 5%.

Revenue estimates include: increases in state and federal funding as well as increases in fares and miscellaneous revenue, all mainly related to the merger with South Portland Bus Service. Current municipal funding reflects an overall 17.9% increase, which includes a 23.6% increase in operating

funding (over 2024 actual- Gorham's assessment was not included in 2024 budget) and a 38.1% decrease in capital funding based on the 2025-2029 CIP. Revenue increases in all categories are mainly related to the merger with South Portland Bus Service, with small increases related to estimated growth in ridership. ARPA funding will offset 100% of ARPA-related service improvements.

Discussion also included current fare revenue recovery rates lower than anticipated at 85% versus the 95% hoped for. Levels have declined in 2024 when compared to 2023 due to the Fare Deal promotion in 2023. Discussion ensued on nation-wide ridership recovery rates in relation to agencies our size. Mike Tremblay will provide peer comparisons at a future meeting. South Portland fare growth patterns were noted to be the same as Metro's with similar fare trends. Committee members inquired about the percentage of budget increase without South Portland, with CFO Brooks referencing the prior meeting's budget presentation.

Shelly continued the 2025 budget presentation by reviewing increases to wages and benefits, debt service and capital funding. She further stated there were no significant changes in department budgets. Brief discussion then ensued regarding upcoming capital projects, local match, and availability of additional funding due to the South Portland merger, and which merger costs may be covered.

Discussion then turned to paratransit ridership declines. Glenn Fenton noted his intention to address the issue with RTP at the time of the 2025 contract renewal. Discussion turned to back to revenue targets, fare recovery, fare capping, and best practices for incremental fare increases along with future on-board fare collection improvements. For 2025, budgeted fare collections will remain flat.

Budget discussion concluded around future funding sources with ARPA dropping out in 2026, support for bridge funding and additional allocations due to the South Portland merger along with added advertising dollars due to greater policy flexibility.

John Thompson made a motion to approve the 2025 Draft Budget. Merrill Barter seconded the motion. After a roll call of the members present, it was unanimously approved.

## **V. Future Agenda Items:**

- Review board policies pertaining to procurement (TBD)
- Comprehensive review of board policies (TBD)
- Federal Grant Awards/Activity (TBD)
- Long Range Financial Forecasting (Ongoing)
- Transit Asset Management Plan (TBD)
- Cash Flow and TAN Borrowing (TBD)
- State Funding: baseline and recurring (Ongoing)
- Fare Levels and Potential Increases
- PACTS Funding Formula – Post-merger change in split

## **VI. Upcoming Meetings:**

- Executive Committee – November 13, 2024 at 3:30 pm
- Ridership Committee – November 13, 2024 at 8:45 am
- Board of Directors – October 25, 2024 at 4:00 pm
- Finance Committee – TBD

**VII. Adjournment: Jeff Levine motions, Merrill Barter seconds. Paul Bradbury adjourns at 5:00 PM.**



## FINANCE COMMITTEE

## AGENDA ITEM 4

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### DATE

February 27, 2025

### SUBJECT

Committee Goal Setting

### PURPOSE

Committee will review Metro's strategic plan and most recent goals. Committee will discuss a strategy to revise goals to inform committee's workplan.

### BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Metro's Mission, Vision and Values statements were approved in 2023. The next step in updating Metro's Strategic Plan is to add goals that support the Mission, Vision and Values. Each of Metro's committees has been tasked with identifying key goals related to the committee's charge to be incorporated into the strategic plan.

The committee may choose to update previous priorities and goals or create new goals and priorities.

### FISCAL IMPACT

None.

### RECOMMENDATION

### CONTACT

Shelly Brooks

Chief Financial Officer

207-221-8710

[sbrooks@gpmetro.org](mailto:sbrooks@gpmetro.org)

### ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Strategic Plan



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## STRATEGIC PLAN

### OUR VISION (2023)

Be the mobility option of choice that connects people to each other and all the places that make for a full life;

### OUR MISSION (2023)

Provide a public transportation experience that is frequent, fast, safe, and simple.  
Serve as a foundation for regional prosperity, growing communities, and a healthy environment.

### CORE VALUES (2023)

- **Safety** – our highest priority is the safety of our riders, employees, and the public.
- **Service** – we serve our riders and communities; we support our employees; we act in the public interest.
- **Simplicity** – we do the hard work to make transit easy for all.
- **Sustainability** – We commit to responsible and equitable practices today to ensure a sustainable and better future.
- **Innovation** – with imagination and determination we never stop building a better public transportation experience for riders.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITIES (2016)

#### Priority 1 – Maintain what we have

Protect today's service through a well-equipped and developed staff and properly maintained and managed physical assets.

#### Priority 2 – Increase service levels in Metro's core service area

Improve frequency and hours of operation where ridership demand reasonably warrants within the current service area.

#### Priority 3 – Improve the Customer Experience

Introduce enhancements that improve the customer experience including (for example) an electronic fare collection system, smart cards, mobile payment, automatic on-board voice announcements, on-board Wi-Fi, and upgraded bus shelters/transit centers.

#### **Priority 4 – Expand the Metro Service Area**

Based on demonstrated ridership demand, add service to areas within the Metro service area that lack transit service or introduce service to jurisdictions outside the current Metro service area.

### **MAJOR GOALS AND OBJECTIVES (2016)**

#### **Provide High Quality Operations**

1. Develop and implement performance and asset management systems. **Partially complete**

#### **Achieve Long-term Financial Sustainability**

1. Complete fare policy review and implement Board approved fare adjustments and policies. **Complete**
2. Continue to seek new funding sources and diversify sources of revenue **Ongoing**
3. Implement concrete methods and benchmarks as part of an ongoing effort to contain costs. **Partially complete**

#### **Strengthen Metro’s Organizational Capacity**

1. Continue to develop and support staff professional development, provide the resources to be successful and ensure sustainable work-loads. **Ongoing**
2. Develop and implement plans to extend Metro’s capacity through effective partnerships with member communities, partner agencies, and private/non-profit sector organizations. **Ongoing**
3. Develop capacity to assist communities in prioritizing transit supportive policies through the community planning and property development processes. **Ongoing**

#### **Improve Transit Network Performance**

1. Develop and submit a transit agency consolidation plan to the City of South Portland. **Complete**
2. Continue to advance and support regional strategies to make the transportation network more seamless for passengers. **Ongoing**

#### **Build Ridership**

1. Optimize bus routes and service levels based on smart transit planning principles balanced with local needs. **Complete**
2. Seek funding and local commitments for improvements to route frequencies, span of service and expansions where it makes sense. **Ongoing**
3. Procure and install an electronic fare payment/collection system. **Complete**
4. Advance transit pass program initiative with University of Southern Maine. **Complete**
5. Develop plans and secure funding to improve bus stops and overall transit accessibility. **Ongoing**
6. Invest in creative branding and marketing approaches to raise awareness and excitement around expansion service, real-time bus arrival technology deployment and transit service generally. **Complete**

## FINANCE COMMITTEE

## AGENDA ITEM 5

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### DATE

February 27, 2025

### SUBJECT

Suggested Committee Items

### PURPOSE

Staff to provide input on suggested topics/issues that the Committee may review.

### BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

Metro's newly formed Planning and Operations Committee must work to advance a workplan as well as new and reoccurring items to be reviewed by the committee. Staff have developed the following list of items for consideration:

- Review of Metro Financial Policies
  - Fund Balance
  - Procurement
  - Local Match
- Long-Range Financial Planning
- DBE Program Review and Update
- Advocating for Additional Funding
- Building Ridership

### FISCAL IMPACT

None.

### RECOMMENDATION

Review suggested topics and provide input.

### CONTACT

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### ATTACHMENTS

None