



**CASCO BAY ISLAND TRANSIT DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING OF**

Thursday, November 20th, 2025

56 Commercial Street, Portland, ME

In Person/Video Conference/Phone

*Video of entire meeting is online [here](https://vimeo.com/showcase/11470098?share=copy).

<https://vimeo.com/showcase/11470098?share=copy>

| | Webex | <u>Attendance</u> In Person | Phone | Absent |
|----------------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| <i>Directors:</i> | | | | |
| Jen Lavanture (Pres) | | X | | |
| Joe Donovan (1 st VP) | | X | | |
| Max Pizey (2 nd VP) | | X | | |
| Jean Hoffman (Treasurer) | | X | | |
| James Luedke (Clerk) | | X | | |
| Bud Higgins (Asst. Clrk) | | X | | |
| Nate Cooper | X | | | |
| Paul Belesca | | X | | |
| Sharoan Cohen | | X | | |
| Dave Crowley | | X | | |
| Mike Murray | | X | | |
| Bill Geary | X | | | |
| Erik Winchester | | X | | |

Staff:

| | | | | |
|------------|---|---|--|---|
| C. Gildart | | | | X |
| Pottle | X | | | |
| Bowie | | | | X |
| Bryand | | X | | |
| Bishop | | X | | |
| Charette | | X | | |

Public:

| | | | | |
|----------------|---|---|---|---|
| Sneyd | | X | | |
| Heinemann | X | | | |
| Rogus | | | | X |
| Call In User 1 | | | X | |
| Call In User 2 | | | X | |

1. Call to Order
 - a. President Lavanture called the meeting to order at 7:49 a.m.
 - b. It was noted the meeting was being recorded.
 - c. Charette did roll call.
2. Approval of meeting minutes from October 23, 2025
 - a. Lavanture asked to move to accept minutes from September 25th.
 - i. Cohen abstained; did not read minutes. All others present approve. Higgins Moves to accept minutes, Hoffman seconds. No public comment or director comment. Minutes approved.
3. Old Business
4. New Business
 - A. Annual Election Process
 - a. Clerk Leudke certifies election results. Donovan moves to accept certification of results, Lavanture seconds. Roll call: unanimous of all present.
 - b. Luedke swears in new directors.
 - i. Lavanture welcomes Winchester as new member of Board.
 - c. Lavanture introduces nominating and election of Board officers. Reminds of nominating committee and process, including secret ballots. Gives floor to Donovan, chair of nominating committee.
 - i. Donovan notes committee is himself, Higgins, and Pizey. Committee would like Board to reconsider election process in coming years but keeping as-is this year.
 - ii. After discussion, slate of officers being currently presented would be the same slate that currently exists for continuity and with respect to new GM. Reminds that current slate is: Lavanture as president, Donovan as 1st vice president, Pizey as 2nd vice president, Hoffman as treasurer, Luedke as clerk, and Higgins as assistant clerk. Board members are welcome to make their own selections if they do not agree.
 - iii. Higgins notes period of ongoing change and that the help of current Board leadership and continuity of that, was a large factor in recommendation.
 - iv. Lavanture asks for comments or nominations from the floor. There are none.
 - v. Charette hands out ballots. Bryant and Dinsmore leave room to tally.
 - d. Dinsmore announces results: slate of officers recommended by nominating committee approved unanimously. Luedke swears in officers.
5. Workshops
 - a. Lavanture introduces workshop on Maquoit II replacement process. Notes VAC committee has been overseeing and that Preliminary Design Report is now available. Important to get before Board prior to any decisions on next steps. Intent is presentation of information and opportunities for feedback, but no official decisions at this time.
 - i. Donovan agrees with Lavanture, and that it is a draft PDR, but important step towards final approval. Need to work towards getting the vessel into a position for funding. Delays could lead to some funds going to other transit organizations. Plan is to get PDR before Board at December meeting and get approval for it. Notes the many past meetings on vessel and great staff input. Propulsion a major factor being presented at current meeting. Turns over discussion to Cory Wood at Bristol Harbor Group.
 - ii. Cory Wood from BHG gives background on process: rode Maquoit II, talked to captains, crew and maintenance staff. Then attended VAC meeting for additional feedback. Guidance from that initial meeting was for a freight boat that carried passengers. Operators expressed desire for more flexibility in operations and reliability for down bay islands.

- iii. Recommended design is a slightly larger vessel. This allows for larger freight areas, 2 cranes instead of one and both larger. 310 passengers including standing room, ADA compliant. Notes current Maquoit passenger count is 399 passengers.
- iv. Other highlights are boarding at multiple deck levels, better hull form with less vibrations. Can include wing stations from pilot house for captains to witness docking/cranes without leaving pilot house, improved sight lines. Exterior bow seating was added as advised by committee for tourism purposes. Improved passenger flow also advised by committee.
- v. Lower decks, the vehicles shown for scale purposes are full-size F-150 trucks. Opportunity for open stern for loading.
- vi. Wood speaks to docking challenges at each island. Crew was polled and best solution was matching as closely as possible to Maquoit II docking design, in terms of freeboard and deck elevations, where possible.
- vii. Recommendation is 3 Diesel Electric C18s. Not highest weighted in all criteria but offers CBL best combination of benefits while minimizing CAPEX costs and uncertainty. Flexibility and reliability key aspects and structure allows for adding the battery option in later years. DE with 3 generators allows for redundancy and reliability. Z drive or an L drive allowed as possibilities.
- viii. Cost estimate. NWE was contractor for price quote. 20 years of experience as contractor for government agencies. Direction given was for a conceptual cost estimate with a conventional propulsion system: Diesel mechanical as starting point, with increases and adjustments after recommendations from Board. All financial figures are for 2025, with no adjustments for future inflation. Notes that cost estimate took historical data into account, looking at previous RFPs. Recent shipyard responses to RFPs are not cost driven, but market driven. Gives several examples but costs are above historical trend lines and can be expected to remain that way. Recommends including a significant margin to account for this.
- ix. Luedke asks if consideration has been made on size of wake from vessel. Wood says it has not yet, will be part of functional vessel design discussion. Luedke, Belesca, and Wood discuss proposed hull design.
- x. Higgins asks about adding less fossil fuel-based systems later. Wood comments that current design allows for many future conversions. Batteries or power packs, electric drive lines.
- xi. Pizey asks for clarification on design. Does boat run as diesel engines with option for electric. Wood shows design plan is for diesel-electric engines.
- xii. Lavanture asks Bishop to reiterate points made at VAC meeting regarding redundancies and advantages of DE C18s. Bishop mentions that the Battery Steele will also have C-18s, as does the Wabanaki, and the more similar equipment across vessels, the better. Notes that with current vessel, if an engine is down, vessel is out of service. With proposed arrangement, vessel can still run while crew works on a downed engine underway. Reliability large factor.
- xiii. Pizey asks Bryant if reduction in capacity is historically an issue. Bryant says current boat is rarely at capacity.
- xiv. Luedke asks if all three generators run all the time. Bishop says vessel would run on 2 generators with a 3rd as emergency energy source.
- xv. Hoffman reiterates concern that boat is being designed for summer and will only create revenue during summer months. CBL should not spend money on adding any additional capacity for bringing people to Peaks for summer season. Appreciates discussion being brought to Board level.

- xvi. Kelsey asks if vessel would be potentially used in a down bay/Peaks combination route and if electric bicycles are being transported heavily and if vessel could accommodate. Wood comments that transportation of bicycles should not be an issue. Lavanture says plan for vessel is to service down bay islands, but like current operation dictates, it can be expected to stop at Peaks sporadically, primarily for freight purposes.
- xvii. Donovan reminds that PDR is not the final design but is necessary to keep the process moving. There will still be opportunity for design changes after potential PDR approval. Reiterates that design is a freight boat; 310 passengers versus 399 is irrelevant. Any Peaks trips will be up to staff. Down bay boats are not likely to support themselves due to less people, but more efficiency overall is good for CBITD. Different needs for every island.
- xviii. Donovan asks Pottle for next steps after PDR. Pottle comments PDR is the blueprint for moving forward with final design. Final details need to be worked out but concept needs to be approved by the Board prior. Once Board has approved PDR, BHG will focus on designing the vessel in compliance with the approved PDR. Type of propulsion, basic size of vessel, basic features and keeps the process on track. Pottle would then work with Wood for finalization, and future committee meeting presentation. Focus needed.
- xix. Belesca asks Board to keep an open mind on design changes. A preliminary design still allows for more changes moving forward. References Luedke's comments about wake size being an example. Crowley supports Belesca's comments.
- xx. Lavanture questions escalating scope and scale and how it meets needs of CBITD.
- xxi. Donovan speaks to need for more freight capabilities, and while not unanimously approved, most of committee felt it was better to bring to the Board then to start the plan over from the beginning.
- xxii. Pizey asks about docking space for vessels. Donovan mentions an additional slide presentation will detail docking space, including Gate 5. BHG was made aware of docking situations and the MDOT plan for changes at docks; expecting no issues. Wider beam, but staff present at VAC meetings did not think it would be an issue, but more of a challenge.
- xxiii. Luedke advocates for more passenger capacity to match the growing island populations if it is to be a 30-40 year boat.
- xxiv. Hoffman commends discussions with crew on vessel design, but would like more objective analysis, including GM, on the future of freight and what can be done for more efficiency. Would like to see analysis of a more cost effective boat that required less subsidies and could support down bay islands more.
- xxv. Donovan advocates for accommodating more islanders with schedule changes as opposed to redesign of vessel. CBITD needs replacement vessel for a very important freight boat that is aging. Reminds of potential 5-year timeline before planned vessel would be ready, and likely high costs of running current vessel during that time.
- xxvi. Higgins supports Board review in following month, asks for next steps. Donovan says VAC would like more input from Board members and public on any questions from PDR, with plan to vote at December Board meeting. VAC meeting in December again as well.
- xxvii. Lavanture reminds of flaws in Battery Steele process. Questions whether the term preliminary could be misleading and further along in the process than members of the public and those not on the VAC committee are expecting, as it concerns

core underlying parameters and assumptions. Prior to Board vote, would like specific outline of next steps. Assuming Board approves PDR, what is cost and timing of final design, securing funding, and bid process. Board needs certain milestones and governance parameters; when do decisions come back to Board with thresholds. Asks for Dinsmore's eventual input. Would also like more data on freight capacities.

- xxviii. Donovan recognizes concerns brought forth by Lavanture, but advocates for getting through Preliminary Design approval for no further delays.
- xxix. Higgins supports a quick resolution of pre-approval and current proposal meets needs of downbay residents.
- xxx. Belesca clarifies comments were not to derail current effort and design. Still opportunities for improvements to design, but is committed to moving forward to obtaining funding.
- xxxi. Luedke also supports moving forward. Major concerns about overall bandwidth at shipyards for work in coming years and process should start as soon as possible.
- xxxii. Lavanture clarifies proposed next steps. Would like GM Dinsmore's formal comments on PDR, analysis of freight operations, revenue from freight, and ridership, formalization from VAC to Board. Must meet needs of down bay residents, but must also consider fiduciary responsibility of a larger boat and cost analysis to current Maquoit for fully informed Board decision. Current timeline of 1-2 months to gather this information and present to Board.
- xxxiii. Hoffman comments that more data on freight is needed. Some data like freight to Peaks versus freight to down bay can be found in financials, but volume and expense versus income needs more information. Not yet available for discussion by Finance Committee.
- xxxiv. Lavanture asks that timeline be discussed at Executive Committee meeting. Donovan commends input of committee.

6. General Information Reports

- a. Lavanture asks that committee and staff reports are confined to written with exception of presentation by Dinsmore and Hoffman on large vehicle rates.
 - i. Dinsmore gives presentation on proposed Large Vehicle rates and the logic behind suggested pricing.
 - ii. Hoffman notes proposal still open for comments. December Finance Committee will have rates as principle topic, more opportunity for feedback and comment. Plan is for Finance Committee to then reach a decision on a vote to recommend to the Board. Board would then have a formal workshop. Target date for implementation, accounting for PUC process, would be February
 - iii. Hoffman gives Financials update. September financials are preliminaries for fiscal year. Operating deficit on preliminary basis, prior to audit, was 2.5 million loss. Compares to 2.7 million loss for year previous. 4.5 million loss in FY2023, when Board targeted improvements. 7.4 million in revenues was 5% increase over previous year. Expenses up 2%. Good results overall.
 - iv. Donovan mentions that Operations agenda item included what to be brought to Board discussion, and request was from staff that Board clarifies goals for summer schedule and what is to be accomplished.

b. Committee Reports

c. Staff Reports

7. General Announcements

- a. Establish next meeting dates (all meetings at 7:45 AM unless indicated otherwise):
 - i. Executive Committee: Thursday, December 4, 2025
 - ii. Finance Committee: Friday, December 12, 2025
(Hoffman requests change from 12/10)
 - iii. Operations Committee: Thursday, December 11, 2025
 - iv. Board of Directors: Thursday, December 18, 2025
 - v. Personnel Committee: TBD
 - vi. Sales & Marketing Committee: TBD
 - vii. Government Relations Committee: TBD
 - viii. Pension Committee: TBD
 - ix. Nominating Committee: TBD
- 8. Lavanture asks for public comment on any items not on the agenda. There are none.
- 9. Directors comment on any items not on the agenda
 - a. Lavanture working on formation of committees for coming year and asks directors to contact her for input on what committees they would like to be part of. Encourages directors and other participants at meeting to ask members of the public that may be interested in being public committee members to also contact her.
- 10. Adjournment
 - a. Lavanture asks for motion to adjourn. Crowley moves to adjourn, Pizey seconds.

Respectfully submitted by:

James Luedke, Clerk

