



Casco Bay Island Transit District Special Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Thursday, September 3, 2026 at 8:00 AM

This meeting will be an **in-person** meeting with remote participation option available
The public is invited to participate: Video Conference Link and Call-in number are available at:
<https://www.cascobaylines.com/about-us/board/>

	Webex	<u>Attendance</u> In Person	Phone	Absent
<i>Directors:</i>				
Jen Lavanture		X		
Joe Donovan		X		
Max Pizey	X			
Jean Hoffman		X		
James Luedke		X		
Bud Higgins		X		
Nate Cooper				X
Paul Belesca	X			
Erik Winchester		X		
Dave Crowley				X
Heather Moretti	X			
Bill Geary				X

<i>Staff:</i>				
C. Gildart				X
Pottle				X
Dinsmore		X		
Bryand		X		
Charette		X		
Bowie		X		

<i>Public:</i>				
Ross Sneyd	X			
Lynn Heinnmann	X			
Call-in User 1			X	
Call-in User 2			X	



1. Call to Order
 - a. Lavanture calls meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.
 - b. Charette conducts roll call.
2. New Business
 - a. Consideration and action regarding timing of winter sailing schedule.
 - i. Lavanture notes current item is a follow-up to item on August Board meeting, specifically winter sailing schedule for 2026/2027. Ultimately had one motion on that schedule that did not pass, specific to adoption. Had personally committed to looking at past precedent and action for where that left current Board on winter schedule. After thorough review and taking into account the schedule modifications made in advance of 2025/2026 sailing schedule, schedule is in place for coming season as well as future winter seasons moving forward. There had been no concept of a pilot winter season schedule, so schedule is approved as determined last year. Also reminds there has been recent precedent of considering timing of transition from winter schedule to spring schedule. Last two seasons the winter schedule was extended until May before transitioning to spring for various reasons, including commitment to reducing deficit and operational issues. Also past precedent of winter schedule transitioning in mid-April, Patriots Day. In interest of clear policy, intent today is to establish procedure moving forward, for both residents, on-island businesses, and operational planning for CBL staff and GM. Thanks Dinsmore for analysis including reviews of past board decisions before his tenure. GM memo sent as part of materials included core considerations and trade-offs. Also included a presentation with updated financial estimates based on conversations at last meeting, including Geary's request for inclusion of any revenue. Request from Dinsmore is to set clear policy direction on schedule so there is not ambiguity moving forward year to year, with the understanding that Board can reconsider if needed. Timely action needed today for full clarity heading into winter season but also to clear a path for easier future discussions. Thanks Board members for thoughtful discussion and recommendations leading to this point. Lavanture notes that there has been Board member support for a broader schedule analysis discussion. Recommendation is timely action today for upcoming winter season, but also formally incorporate a broader schedule evaluation project into budget and planning cycle for 2027. Asks Dinsmore for any comments before putting a motion on the floor.
 - ii. Dinsmore supports Lavanture's comments. Need to remove ambiguity and voting on schedule repeatedly with the potential for no resolution. References additional analysis around revenue that was shared with Board, which shows no major difference in ridership between 2024, when this schedule was run in April, and this year. The only additional revenue would be acquired through Diamond Pass run. 1pm boat from April through the third week of May would generally be 400 tickets, which at current rates taking into account breaks in ticket price for children and seniors, would be \$6400 in revenue. Other revenue was shown to be mailboat runs but equates to less than \$500. Total cost of running these boats as part of spring schedule was determined earlier to be roughly 32k. With projected off-set revenue, now \$25,600. Asks for any questions. No questions.
 - iii. Lavanture moves that winter sailing schedule shall commence annually on the Tuesday following Columbus Day, also observed as Indigenous Peoples' Day, and shall remain in effect through the Thursday preceding Memorial Day, provided that in any year in which Memorial Day falls after May 25, the winter schedule shall instead remain in effect through the second Thursday preceding Memorial Day; and further, that the spring sailing schedule shall commence on the Friday immediately following the last day of the winter

schedule; and further, that these dates shall govern unless the Board, by majority vote, adopts different dates for a given year. Pizey seconds.

iv. Lavanture asks for public comment. No public comment.

v. Lavanture asks for director comment.

1. Donovan moves to amend the motion, that winter sailing schedule shall commence annually on the Tuesday following Columbus Day, also observed as Indigenous Peoples' Day, and shall remain in effect through the Thursday preceding Patriots Day, and further, that the spring sailing schedule shall commence on the Friday immediately following the last day of the winter schedule; and further, that these dates shall govern unless the Board, by majority vote, adopts different dates for a given year. Luedke seconds.

2. Public comment, no public comment.

3. Director comment.

a. Hoffman recommends voting against Donovan's amendment. Appreciates Donovan's consistent attention to his constituents, and encourages them to attend future meetings. Stresses importance of financial discipline and decision to make minor cuts in service went through full public process and extending the schedule was based on data. Notes that as predicted ridership did not go down and people adjusted. Financial responsibility is important as a Board and voting to undo work that was done undermines the process. Focus on a schedule assessment for 2027 will be more difficult if amendment should pass and process is not honored. Should respect GM's recommendation, move forward and recognize that a lot of work is coming.

b. Higgins asks for explanation from Donovan for why his amendment is more important than what Dinsmore is proposing.

i. Donovan explains that while schedule changes last year were put in place in an attempt to reduce the deficit, negative impacts were then discovered after it was implemented, specifically the problems at Cliff and Chebeague. Feedback was received about the Saturday down bay boat on weekends, and the removal of the midmorning boat led to a large gap in service. The inner bay islands, the Diamonds and Long, were not as greatly affected outbound, but inbound was greatly affected as Dinsmore's data showed that ridership had been high on that run. This led to, in March, attempting to change the end of the winter schedule back to April, but was voted down at Board level. Argument at that time was there was not enough time to implement, and schedule had been set for staff, so recently brought before the Board again. For down bay residents, changes were significant. Removal of Saturday boat was especially problematic both for residents and contractors wanting to get materials and freight on island. Wants to see the winter schedule end in April, which is when winter rates transition to summer rates.

c. Luedke comments that for parents on the island with children in school, changes to the 1pm boat greatly affected them. Children get out at 2pm or 3pm and parents had to be 2 hours early or 15 minutes late to pick up children.

d. Charette reads chat comment from Moretti asking for Donovan to re-read his amendment as she was unable to hear it initially. Lavanture agrees.

- e. Donovan re-reads amendment.
- f. Dinsmore asks for clarification on wording and timing mentioned in amendment. Donovan clarifies.
- g. Lavanture recommends that Board vote against the amendment. Notes she also has a recommendation from Dinsmore and supported by staff. The timing of the schedule is the issue at hand. Relatively small period of 5-6 weeks, and routines of school children are likely already established from the rest of the school year. What is the incremental benefit relative to the cost, when Board last year carefully deliberated and went through rigorous process to put schedule in place. Operationally it may have affected some, but operationally for the district, it was manageable and ridership adapted. District was able to handle freight through the spring season adequately. Important to be clear on policy, process, and decision making, and went through appropriate process last season. If issues were deemed important, could have been discussed at committee level during summer season. Recalls that the year prior end date was adjusted due to staffing and operational issues in addition to financial reasons. Opposed to amendment and supports Dinsmore recommendation.
- h. Higgins asks Dinsmore to clarify the reason for his schedule suggestion.
 - i. Dinsmore notes he serves at the pleasure of the Board and Board members each represent their respective islands. Took several factors into account when making decision, including what has been signaled by Board as priorities: cost reductions, reducing deficit and increasing revenue. Notes personal experience with living on an island and appreciating the need for ferry service. In a perfect world would provide as much service as able, but Board has signaled the need for discipline and to be mindful of budget. Board voted to reduce the deficit to no more than 1 million and has also indicated putting resources into a complete revaluation of the schedule for efficiencies and savings, in line with the goals the Board has set. The changes being discussed today represent what should be the easiest changes within the system, in terms of improving efficiencies. Past votes include last March where vote was to extend the winter sailing schedule, then in August it was voted to extend it again. Notes there was an opportunity at last meeting to vote to extend to April, which tied 5-5, including down bay reps that did not vote for it, which was also taken into consideration. More than all, need a collective mindset especially with anticipated larger overhaul of schedule. If that cannot be accomplished, then other means of reducing deficit will be necessary. Looked at past precedent of using the April date, but there were not 8am, 1pm, or 6pm boats so consequences are different now. Will do whatever is desired from Board, but has interpreted it as such.
 - i. Luedke asks Dinsmore and Bowie if these changes, beyond the 25k, are likely to impact the financial outlook. Residents of Long, Great Diamond and Cliff want these changes, so this is what needs to be weighed. Cannot say why all down bay islands did not vote in favor, but can say that Great Diamond and Long residents want it. Reiterates issues with picking

- children up from school and sports and while a small timeframe, comes during a busy time of school year.
- j. Winchester asks for reminder on overall cost during that timeframe. Dinsmore confirms that with the revenue offset, it is 25k net cost.
 - k. Bowie responds to Luedke that dating back to 2024, an issue has been staffing and any additional overtime would lead to further costs. 25k should be considered the baseline, but there could be more costs.
 - l. Belesca appreciates Donovan's amendment, but Chebeague in unique situation. Residents are typically in line with down bay islands on issues of seasonality, specifically opening seasonal houses and the need for contractors, on this particular issue, based on facts from Chebeague, ridership adapts. Was not an easy change to lose morning weekend boat, but post office adapted and services were provided. Recognizes that the impact was not the same on Chebeague as it was on Cliff, Long, and other locations. Understands amendment, but aligns with fiduciary duties to the District.
 - m. Donovan comments that in response to Higgins question earlier, he neglected to mention the impacts on inner bay islands, and specifically some weekend workers that travel between them, needing to take water taxis to get to work.
- 4. Lavanture asks Charette to conduct roll call on the motion proposed by Donovan and seconded by Luedke.
 - a. Charette conducts roll call vote. Motion fails 7-2.
 - 5. Lavanture notes that original motion is back to floor, brought forward by her and seconded by Pizey, that is consistent with recommendation by Dinsmore in his memo. Offers to re-state it if necessary.
 - a. Opens floor to director or public comment on the original motion. No comments.
 - b. Lavanture asks Charette to conduct roll call vote on original motion. Unanimous of all present, 9-0. Motion passes.
 - 6. Lavanture thanks all directors for additional time required and thoughtful discussion.
3. Adjournment – Hoffman moves to adjourn, Lavanture seconds. No objections. Meeting adjourned at 8:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

James Luedke, Clerk



