Casco Bay Lines — Serving the Islands of Casco Bay from Portland, Maine

DRAFT Minutes

CASCO BAY ISLAND TRANSIT DISTRICT
MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING & PUBLIC HEARING OF
Thursday, September 25th, 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

Attendance

Directors:

	Webex	**In Person**	**Phone**	**Absent**
Lavanture (Pres)		X		
Donovan (1st VP)		X		
Pizey (2nd VP)	X			
Hoffman (Treasurer)		X		
Luedke (Clerk)		X		
Higgins (Asst. Clrk)		X		
Cooper		X		
Belesca	X			
Cohen		X		
Crowley		X		
Murray		X		
Geary		X		

Staff:

	Webex	**In Person**	**Phone**	**Absent**
C. Gildart		X		
Mavodones		X		
Pottle	X			
Bowie				X
Bryand		X		
Bishop		X		
Charette		X		

Public:

	Webex	**In Person**	**Phone**	**Absent**
Sneyd		X		
Heinemann	X			
Call In User 1			X	
Rogus		X		

Call In User 2			X	
Kelsey		X		
Call In User 3			X	

1. Call to Order
    a. President Lavanture called the meeting to order at 7:46 AM.
    b. It was noted the meeting is being recorded.
    c. Gildart did roll call
2. Special announcement: welcome General Manager Ben Dinsmore
    a. Lavanture introduced new GM, Ben Dinsmore. Notes extensive background in both maritime experience and understanding of island life in Maine.
    b. Dinsmore thanks staff and community for welcome.
3. Approval of meeting minutes from August 28, 2025
    a. Lavanture references one minor edit that was made, asks to move to approve minutes. Hoffman moves to approve minutes, Crowley seconds.
    b. Cohen and Geary abstained. All others approved (9-2).
4. Old Business – no items
5. New Business – no items
6. Workshops – no items
7. General Information Reports
    a. Committee Reports
        i. Operations-
            1. Donovan references recent Operations Committee meetings with good attendance and discussion. Items to bring before the Board include: Battery Steele current status and status of what is currently being called the Maquoit III. Decision is made to discuss Battery Steele during current meeting first.
            2. Mavodones updates: CBL staff regularly visiting shipyard, with Mavodones, Bishop, Dinsmore visiting current week, Bryant and CBL captains the week before, and Van Heukelom visiting prior to that. Progress has been moving swiftly, specifically: engine room, battery racks, generators, elevators, transformers and other electrical equipment and wiring. Pilot house work as well. Naval architect from Bristol Harbor Group hired by CBITD is on site 4 days a week, monitoring, and communicating.
            3. Dinsmore comments that while he doesn't have point of reference for previous progress benchmarks, vessel is impressive and boat yard staff seems engaged. Was able to meet with BHG and program of oversight seems good.
            4. Donovan questions that while yard labor force is present, whether all necessary equipment is on-site and available for installation; notes delays earlier in process waiting for parts and equipment. Asks if there are any lead times that still need to be identified.
            5. Pottle says all major lead time items should have been ordered and received. Other than minor items such as wiring and fittings, all should be ordered. Currently working with the Marine Safety Center on approval for fire suppression and safety plan for the battery room and

operation of such a system; some potential for delay. Very new for the USCG and process for getting them all information they need could be lengthy, before they give approval.

6. Higgins asked for possible delivery date. Pottle comments current schedule says January 26th for delivery, plus post-commission work, but expects date to slip 2-3 weeks later based on current discussions. Between vessel finishes, dock and sea trials, January 26th does not seem realistic.
7. Lavanture asks if ABB is lined up in terms of availability and timeline. Mavodones comments they are.
8. Geary relays that problems and delays have arisen at same shipyard with DOT/Maine State Ferry vessel, including propulsion and integration issues, but integrator is BAE.
9. Mavodones mentions that the shipyard has much more experience with ABB and ABB is a larger operation. Shipyard does not expect to run into similar issues with ABB as they did with BAE. Pottle confirms ABB has been extremely responsive. They have teams coordinated and set-up to do commissioning work when the yard is ready. Track record has shown them to be reliable.
10. Cooper asks for timeline once vehicle is delivered. Mavodones expects 6 weeks once delivered, including training, before in actual service.

ii. VAC -

1. Donovan updates on what's being currently called Maquoit III. Next step is Preliminary Design Report (PDR) to Board. Once approved by Board, then move toward financing, grants in place, then eventually out to bid. Propulsion is most recent discussion and very important. Hoffman and Lavanture had raised concerns at VAC about issues that arose during Battery Steele process: that PDR arrived at Board level without full understanding of process from Board and without enough involvement from public. Want to avoid this time around. Donovan references report/packet that details basic outline of vessel. Previous discussion centered around design of vessel and various options. Decision of VAC in collaboration with Bristol Harbor on design was freight capacity, deck capacity, and very good passenger capacity for summer time. Designed as a freight boat that handles passengers that will service CBITD for 30 years. CAPEX, OPEX, Sustainability, Serviceability, Reliability all looked at as evaluations. Eventually, pending recommendation on propulsion was 3 Diesel Electrics without batteries. Was the most middle of the road option: more maneuverability and reliability, but without infrastructure and terminal updates required for a battery system (would not be interchangeable with Battery Steele infrastructure). Asks Board for recommendation in near future. Bristol Harbor has PDR almost finished, except for propulsion. Reminds that estimated 2025 cost outline is a baseline and that with vessel being 3-4 years out, that inflation will increase and overall cost can be expected to rise.
2. Donovan commends Charette on availability of Operations Committee and VAC notes, asks that they be available for future committee meetings.
3. Lavanture reminds that only minutes that are voted on by Board can be considered official, meaning Board of Directors minutes only. All other

notes would be considered draft and informal. Not opposed to availability to relevant committee members.

4. Lavanture comments that while feedback and comments are welcome, that purpose of current Board meeting is not for substantive review of design and PDR of vessel. Has concerns about capital/construction costs and operating costs as well as process as it compares to Battery Steele. Reminds that Battery Steele came in at almost double the anticipated cost of when it was sent to bid.
5. Geary relays MSF recently had bid come in at 41m compared to 35m expectation. Bid was rejected and have gone back to investigating what can be done to bring down costs.
6. Lavanture reiterates purpose of current discussion is to lay the groundwork prior to item coming back to Board as full agenda item with robust presentation. Encourages directors to review PDR and VAC work to date and that eventual decision by Board will be an extremely important one to get correct.
7. Higgins reminds that having safe, effective vessels is cornerstone of organization and replacing is necessity, but also necessary is increasing revenue, decreasing expenses, and finding good grants. Good progress has been made but need to maintain focus on finances.
8. Hoffman supports Lavanture's comments. Commends Donovan on VAC committee work thus far. Recommends remembering how and when process with Battery Steele fell short and utilizing knowledge of new GM and engineering staff to ask deeper questions about whether it is the correct boat and that Board would benefit from that knowledge.
9. Donovan does not want to see current process go backwards to a redesign of vessel. What VAC has recommended was what it was set out to achieve. In current study, OPEX most heavily weighted criteria, and Committee has been focused on that and reducing operating losses in coming years.
10. Lavanture clarifies that rating exercise under discussion was only for propulsion and not entirety of vessel.
11. Donovan agrees but comments that propulsion is large driver of operational costs.
12. Lavanture mentions that in regards to vessel design, understanding the full revenue opportunity and expense profile need to be part of discussion before final decisions can be made.

iii. Finance

1. Hoffman welcomes directors and public to attend October finance committee. September meeting featured initial draft budget presentation for fiscal year 2026. Fiscal year begins in October but decision was made to present twice, for increased review and so that new GM, Dinsmore, is able to make initial review. October Finance Meeting plan is to review budget and hold a vote on whether to recommend or edit budget before bringing to the Board for October BOD meeting approval.
2. Continuing discussion of "large vehicles", previously "commercial" and how to charge appropriately; last part of vehicle rate change discussion.
3. Hoffman again encourages all to attend Finance Committee for further discussion. Gives preliminary preview analysis of summer data: August data available except for financials. Passenger-wise, very busy August for Peaks ridership. June/July flat, August up 17% ridership, 22k more

people to Peaks in August. Notes while June was flat, the year prior, June had been a large increase of 11% despite rate increase for passenger fare. Regarding vehicles, initial revenues will be up and even more so in 2026 full revenue picture once advance purchases are factored, but unit sales Rocketres down 7%, vehicle ridership 6% down. Revenues will show up, passes eligible for discount were up. Further discussion at Finance Committee meeting but results are better than projected.

4. Higgins questions contributing factors to August surge and whether it's sustainable. Mavodones and Gildart reference weather as main factor. Higgins comments in relation to that increase in August ridership, that it helped revenue and while there were more people, did not observe more trash or problems, and that islanders should welcome increased public.
5. Hoffman commends staff. Mavodones relays recent compliments of staff, both shoreside and deckhands.
6. Cohen asks for clarification on reasoning behind move towards replacement of "commercial" plate vehicle rate. Lavanture reminds no official decision has been made, but CBITD operating profile suggests that type of plate does not have as much of an impact as the amount of space a vehicle takes up and there is one car ferry with limitations on space.

b. Staff Reports - Lavanture asks for director comments or questions on staff report. There are none.

8. General Announcements
   a. Establish next meeting dates (all meetings at 7:45 AM unless indicated otherwise):

i.	Executive Committee:	Thursday, October 2, 2025
ii.	Finance Committee:	Wednesday, October 15, 2025
iii.	Operations Committee:	Thursday, October 16, 2025
iv.	Board of Directors:	Thursday, October 23, 2025
v.	Personnel Committee:	TBD
vi.	Sales & Marketing Committee:	TBD
vii.	Government Relations Committee:	TBD
viii.	Pension Committee:	Thursday, October 2, 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

9. Public comment on any items not on the agenda
   a. Kelsey asks if August data supports increased travel to other islands.
      i. Donovan speaks anecdotally that businesses, restaurants, and general sense is Cliff has been much busier. Weather was likely a factor.
      ii. Gildart comments ridership shows increased to all islands, including specialty cruises and tours, which is what is marketing is spent on.
      iii. Luedke notes an increase every year is noticeable. Should be considered when future decisions are made considering vessels.
      iv. Lavanture supports Finance Committee regularly reviewing both ticket sales and operational ridership and moving towards analyzing both collectively.
      v. Hoffman asks Luedke if anecdotally the restaurants were busy on Great Diamond. Confirms, anecdotally.
10. Directors comment on any items not on the agenda

11. Adjournment

   a. Donovan moved to adjourn. Murray seconded. Roll call completed. 8:45 a.m meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted by: ____________________________

James Luedke, Clerk