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

Casco Bay Island Transit District
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Draft
Thursday, October 29, 2026 at 7:45 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/

Attendance

	Webex	In Person	Phone	Absent
Directors:				
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		
Staff:				
C. Gildart		X		
P. Donovan				X
Dinsmore		X		
Bryand				
Charette		X		
Bowie		X		
Pottle	X			
Public:				
Lynn Heinnmann	X			
Ross Sneyd		X		
Barring Coughlin	X			
Call-in User 1			X	
Call-in User 2			X (7:50)	

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1. Call to Order
    a. Lavanture calls meeting to order at 7:49 a.m.
    b. Charette conducts roll call.
2. Approval of meeting minutes from September 24, 2026.
    a. Lavanture asks for motion to approve minutes, Crowley moves to accept minutes, Pizey seconds.
    b. No public comment.
    c. No director comment.
    d. Charette conducts roll call vote. Unanimous of all present. Motion approved.
3. Old Business
4. New Business
    a. Selection of Nominating Committee to bring forth a recommendation for a slate of Officers at the November 19, 2026, Board meeting.
        i. Lavanture explains nominating committee selection process. Annual meeting is the first meeting after general election, which is regularly scheduled November 19th Board meeting. At that point, Board will elect officers for upcoming year. Current process is election of nominating committee who will select a slate of officers at November meeting.
        ii. Selection ballot handed out to Board members by Charette for vote. Charette collects ballots and leaves room with Gildart to tally.
        iii. Lavanture moves onto next item of business with plan to revisit committee selection after.
5. General Information Reports
    a. Committee Reports
        i. Lavanture notes only Finance committee held a meeting in October.
        ii. Finance Committee – Hoffman reminds that Finance Committee is currently working on the third in the series of the scheduled service rate changes, which is freight rates. Dinsmore has done an analysis, which is available, and there have been multiple presentations of proposed rates and options, which are also available.
        iii. Hoffman also notes the approval of the stub budget, which raises the point of the full year budget with the change of fiscal year, which management is expected to present at the November Finance meeting. Full year budget for the calendar year of 2027, on November 11th. Finance Committee will review, may ask for changes before making a recommendation, at which point it goes to the full Board.
    b. Staff Reports
        i. Lavanture gives floor to Dinsmore, asks for any clarifications on his GM report that was sent out to Board.
        ii. Dinsmore mentions that there is a link to the latest freight proposal within his GM report. Comments there was good discussion at the last meeting pertaining to class protections, such as heating fuel, building supplies, and whether seasonality should apply to certain rates. Down bay vehicles were also discussed.
        iii. Sent update on Battery Steele. Work is progressing, but ballast issue remedy is under discussion and as is responsibility pertaining to that among various parties.
        iv. Security detail was on the premises recently, specifically from TSA. Known as the VIPR team that has been on site in the past, roughly every 6-8 weeks. The same outfits that are typically at the airport doing random rounds through various transportation facilities across the state and across the country. Included information on that within GM report in the event there was any concern among constituents.
        v. Down bay vessel – Selected integrator, which will be ABB. Have begun designing propulsion and electrical system for down bay boat. BHG will be at next Operations meeting with an update. Will represent first update of the final design phase. Encourages all to attend.

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vi. Received update from Maine DOT. Tentatively starting the work on the Peaks Island transfer bridge on March 8th. Need to start looking at scheduling and barge service to decide how that will work.
vii. Machigonne is going into dry dock a few weeks prior to Maine DOT work. Attempting to align the two timeframes to maximize funds. Idea is to have only 30 days of barge service rather than 6-8 weeks.
viii. Bay Mist is going into dry dock in December, Machigonne is planned for February, and Aucocisco will be at the end of March, early April.
ix. Switching over to a new text alert provider. Company that has been used thus far has been bought out and will no longer support the system that CBL currently utilizes. Gildart and Operations team will be providing more information, but will be attempting to integrate phone numbers that are already in current system.
x. New cruise has been added to holiday cruise offerings.
xi. Reiterates that 2027 budget is being looked at, as Hoffman mentioned. Any input from the Board on additional projects that may be looked at for the year should be incorporated into the budget, if there is Board consensus on what those may be.
xii. Dinsmore asks for any questions.
    1. Belesca asks about mention of Battery Steele in GM report and asks Dinsmore to expand on issue as much as possible, within acceptable public discussion.
        a. Dinsmore recommends Executive Session to discuss. Lavanture agrees.
        b. Belesca supports executive session, asks how to proceed and address.
        c. Dinsmore comments that counsel has been engaged and that discussion is ongoing.
        d. Belesca asks if there are any general terms that can be addressed at current meeting, with respect to parties or identification of parties.
        e. Hoffman asks about possibility of going into executive discussion at current meeting. Lavanture responds that advance notice may be required.
        f. Lavanture comments that district has taken a position that district is not responsible for incremental costs that are being incurred.
        g. Belesca suggests that may apply to particular issue at current time, but there may be other factors that tie in as well.
        h. Lavanture agrees and reminds Board that liquidated damages are also being assessed, due to the delays with the shipyard and contract provisions.
        i. Belesca asks for current accrued liquidated damage amount.
        j. Pottle comments that it is roughly 500k, but does not have exact amount at hand.
    2. Higgins asks for reminder on Peaks bridge timeline. Dinsmore comments it is scheduled to begin March 8th and is estimated to take 30 days. Higgins asks that information be conveyed to islanders as much as possible, as well as any issues that come up so there are no surprises. Dinsmore confirms that information and updates will be sent out. Notes his last seven GM reports have had reminders and reminds of earlier comment that attempts will be made to coordinate with the Machigonne being out of the water.
    3. Pizey asks for timeline of DOT bridge work. Dinsmore mentions it is expected to be 30 days.
    4. Donovan supports Belesca's comments that Board should be brought fully up to date on Battery Steele and asks that if Executive Session is necessary, that it be today if possible.

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a. Lavanture responds that she agrees with executive session with counsel present, but lack of information is reason it was not on agenda. Will schedule but counsel should be present and it must be publicly noticed.
b. Belesca asks that as it was contained within the GM report, can background information be shared today, without posing questions that could require legal advice for future action.
c. Dinsmore offers to clarify comments from his GM report. Battery Steele did not end up being at the correct draft.
d. Belesca responds he read all the GM reports surrounding Battery Steele. Certain elements were straight forward, such as modifications as the result of sea trials, but suggests CBL has deviated from that. Asks that all information be presented in appropriate forum so that when legal counsel is present, Board is more prepared to pose questions about the direction or options for district.
e. Lavanture suggests management prepare updated summary of current situation that can be shared publicly and in advance. Counsel may have further comments they wish to present strictly within executive session. From there, schedule a special meeting in next two weeks with item as the only topic and with counsel present.
f. Hoffman supports questions from Belesca and notes his expertise and knowledge pertaining to boats. Belesca responds he is primarily concerned about legal, contractual, and fiduciary responsibilities. Hoffman agrees. Constituents have long been concerned about cost overruns with this vessel, and Board, as public representatives, should be mindful of that and disclosing that Board is fighting back on costs.

5. Donovan asks if last date given by Bryand, December 4th, is still accurate. Dinsmore responds it is highly unlikely. Donovan asks for confirmation that delays in release of vessel were related to tonnage. One, apparently resolved by shipyard had to do with the Brooks tonnage issue. Dinsmore confirms that has been resolved by shipyard. Donovan comments second issue was related to ballast and last the Board heard was that the lead was in place, and where it was to be placed was solved, plan was for it to be installed. Asks Dinsmore if this was completed, regardless of who is responsible. Dinsmore confirms the installation of Ballast is being delayed and is what is holding up vessel delivery.
6. Donovan asks if Battery Steele will be ready in time to help with assistance during bridge work when Machigonne is out of service. Dinsmore comments the best-case scenario is that Battery Steel is available, but vessel would need to start working immediately and would require a perfect acceptance through local commissioning of vessel and crew training. With that in mind, working on contingencies in preparation of the Battery Steele not being available.
7. Donovan asks about training plan and period of time involved.
    a. Dinsmore confirms that plan for training has been in place since May, and timeline was for 60 days, then another 7 days for the USCG signing off. Dinsmore defers to Geary to speak to his experience with State boat and whether 67 days is an accurate timeframe.
    b. Geary comments CBL vessel is slightly more complex being all electric, but CBL has a better integrator in ABB, whereas State had issues with integrator BAE. Boat has now been in Rockland for 2 months with familiarization cruising taking place, crew training, and USCG sign-offs. Process with USCG was faster than expected, considering State vessel was

hybrid. 60 days a fair estimate. Sea trials need to be completed and State ran into integration issues that required more work and then more trials. Crew became comfortable with new vessel after roughly 5 trips and became familiar with the new technology on boat. 60 days is reasonable.

8. Lavanture confirms she will work with Dinsmore to schedule a follow-up meeting in near future with Executive Session and to include advice of counsel in next couple of weeks.

6. General Announcements
    a. Return to item 4a: Lavanture comments that nominating committee will be Moretti, Pizey, and Winchester.
    b. Establish next meeting dates, with all meetings at 7:45 AM unless indicated otherwise. Possibility of second finance committee in November to further discuss freight rates.

        i. Executive Committee: Thursday, November 5, 2026
        ii. Finance Committee: Tuesday, November 11, 2026
        iii. Operations Committee: Thursday, November 12, 2026
        iv. Board of Directors: Thursday, November 19, 2026
        v. Personnel Committee: TBD
        vi. Government Relations Committee: TBD
        vii. Pension Committee: TBD

7. Public comment on any items not on the agenda – No public comment.
8. Directors comment on any items not on the agenda.
    a. Hoffman mentions that several Peaks residents have noticed Machigonne going around House Island which is a longer route that uses more fuel. Residents intended to come to current meeting to raise concerns but are sick. Concerns are money being wasted as they know what fuel for their personal vehicles cost, and how that relates to Board's commitment to reducing deficit.
        i. Crowley confirms that the same thing is happening down bay where boat is taking alternative route that is adding additional time and using more fuel.
            1. Dinsmore asks Crowley if a commitment was made to maintaining exact routes, if Crowley would support slowing vessel speed down.
            2. Crowley responds that he would and that if distance is reduced, speed could also be reduced.
            3. Crowley mentions he has AIS route data that he will share, and while it does not happen every day, other days it happens several times a day.
    b. Hoffman mentions that Bowie's financial/expense summary for August included information under vessel expenses on fuel usage, and the usage was up and fuel expense was above budget in August by 44%.
    c. Luedke asks staff if there is a reason that captains would take an alternate, longer route. Dinsmore responds that specific to House Island issue mentioned previously, captain likely decided to take an alternate route. Prior year, there was a instance where a sailing regatta was taking place and captain avoided for safety reasons. Intends to follow up with captains to see what is safety related and what may have been recreational sight-seeing.
9. Adjournment
    a. Lavanture asks for motion to adjourn. Belesca moves to adjourn, Higgins seconds. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 a.m.

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